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POEMS,

BY

JOHN WILSON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

A NEW EDITION.

VOL. II.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH; AND
T. CADELL, STRAND, LONDON.

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* * The Isle of Palms, and about one-half of the Miscellaneous Poems, were first published in the spring of 1812.—The City of the Plague, and the greater part of the other Miscellaneous Poems, in the spring of 1816. The compositions marked in the Index with an asterisk were not in the former editions.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

*Oh ! Nature ! whose Elysian scenes disclose
His bright perfections at whose word they rose,
Next to that Power who form'd thee and sustains,
Be thou the great inspirer of my strains.
Still, as I touch the lyre, do thou expand
Thy genuine charms, and guide an artless hand.*

COWPER.



THE

SCHOLAR'S FUNERAL.

WHY hang the sweet bells mute in Magdalene-Tower,
Still wont to usher in delightful May,*
The dewy silence of the morning hour
Cheering with many a changeful roundelay?
And those pure youthful voices where are they,
That hymning far up in the listening sky,
Seem'd issuing softly through the gates of day,
As if a troop of sainted souls on high
Were hovering o'er the earth with angel melody?

This day the pensive Choristers are mute,
The Tower stands silent in the shades of woe,
And well that darkness and those shadows suit
The solemn hush shed o'er the courts below.

* On the First of May the Choristers ascend the beautiful Tower of Magdalene College, Oxford, and there sing a Latin hymn to the Season.

There all is noiseless as a plain of snow,
Nor wandering footstep stirs th' unechoing wall.
Hark—hark ! the muffled bell is tolling slow !
Into my mournful soul its warnings fall—
It is the solemn day of Vernon's funeral.

No sound last night was heard these courts within,
Save sleepless scholar sobbing in his cell ;
For mirth had seem'd a sacrilegious sin
Against the dead whom all did love so well.
Only—at evening-prayer the holy swell
Of organ at the close of service sent
(While on their knees the awe-struck weepers fell,
Or on the pillar'd shade in anguish leant)
Through the dim echoing aisle a sorrowful lament.

All night the melancholy moonshine slept
O'er the lone chamber where his corpse was laid :
Amid the sighing groves the cold dews wept,
And the sad stars in glimmering beams array'd
In heaven seem'd mourning o'er the parted shade
Of him who knew the nature and the name
Of every orb to human ken display'd,
Whether on silent throne or stedfast flame,
Or roll'd in music round the Universal Frame.

And now the-day looks mournful as the night,
For all o'er heaven black clouds begin to roll,
Through which the dim sun streams a fitful light
In sympathy with man's desponding soul.
Is nought around but images of dole !
The distant towers a kindred sorrow breathe,
Struck 'mid their own groves by that dismal toll ;
And the grey cloisters, coldly stretch'd beneath,
Hush'd in profounder calm confess the power of
death.

Sad for the glory that hath parted thence,
Through spire, tower, temple, theatre, and dome,
Mourns Oxford in her old magnificence,
Sublimely silent 'mid the sunless gloom.
But chief one College weeps her favourite's doom—
All hearts turn thither in the calm of morn ;
Silent she standeth like one mighty tomb,
In reverend beauty—desolate—forlorn—
For her refulgent star is all-untimely shorn.

Her courts grow darker as the hour draws near
When that blest corpse must sink for evermore,
Let down by loving hands to dungeon drear
From the glad world of sunshine cover'd o'er
By the damp pavement of the silent floor !

—Sad all around—as when a gentle day
All dimly riseth o'er a wreck-strewn shore,
When Love at last hath ceas'd to heaven to pray,
And Grief hath wept her fill, and Hope turn'd sick
away.

Yea! even a careless stranger might perceive
That death and sorrow rule this doleful place—
Passing along the grey-hair'd menials grieve,
Nor is it hard a tender gloom to trace
On the young chorister's sunshiny face,
While slow returning from the mournful room
Of friend where they were weeping o'er the days
With Vernon past—profoundly sunk in gloom
The pale-fac'd scholar walks, still dreaming of the
tomb.

Now ghastly sight and lowly-whispering sound
On every side the sadden'd spirit meet—
And notice give to all the courts around
Of doleful preparation—the rude feet
Of death's hir'd menials through this calm retreat
With careless tread are hurrying to and fro—
And loving hearts with pangs of anguish beat,
To see the cloisters blackening all below
With rueful sable plumes—a ghastly funeral-show.

—Come let us now with silent feet ascend
The stair that leads up to yon ancient tower—
—There, lieth in his shroud my dearest friend !
Oh ! that the breath of sighs, the dewy shower
Stream'd from so many eye-lids had the power
Gently to stir, and raise up from its bed
The broken stalk of that consummate flower !
Nought may restore the odours once when shed,
That sunshine smiles in vain—it wakens not the
dead !

Behold ! his parents kneeling side by side,
Still as the body that is sleeping there !
Far off were they when their sweet Henry died,
At once they fell from bliss into despair.
What sorrows slumber in that silvery hair !
The old man groans, nor dares his face to show
To the glad day-light—while a sobbing prayer
Steals from the calmer partner of his woe,
Who gently lays her hand upon those locks of
snow.

He lifts his eyes—quick through a parting cloud
The sun looks out—and fills the room with light,
Hath given a purer lustre to the shroud,
And plays and dances o'er those cheeks so white.

“Curst be the cruel Sun ! who shines so bright
“Upon my dead boy’s face ! one kiss—one kiss—
“Before thou sink to everlasting night !
“My child—my child !—oh ! how unlike to this
“The last embrace I gavę in more than mortal
 bliss.”

Pale as a statue bending o’er a tomb,
The childless mother ! as a statue still !
But Resignation, Hope, and Faith illume
Her upward eyes ! and her meek spirit fill
With downy peace, which blasts of earthly ill
May never ruffle more—a smile appears
At times to flit across her visage chill,
More awful rendering every gush of tears
Shed at the dark eclipse of all life’s sunny years.

The whole path from his cradle to his grave
She travels back with a bewilder’d brain !
Bright in the gales of youth his free locks wave,
As if their burnish’d beauty laugh’d at pain,
And god-like claim’d exemption from the reign
Of grief, decay, and death ! Her touch doth meet
Lips cold as ice that ne’er will glow again,
And lo ! from these wan lips unto his feet
Drawn by the hand of death a ghostly winding-sheet !

She hop'd to have seen him in yon hallow'd grove,
With gay companions laughing at his side,
And listening unto him whom all did love !
For she had heard with pure maternal pride
How science to his gaze unfolded wide
Her everlasting gates—but as he trod
The Temple's inner shrine, he sank and died—
And all of him that hath not gone to God
Within her loving clasp lies senseless as the clod.

With tottering steps she to the window goes.
Oh ! what a glorious burst of light is there !
Rejoicing in his course the river flows,
And 'neath its coronet of dark-blue air
The stately Elm-grove rises fresh and fair,
Blest in the dewy silence of the skies !
She looks one moment—then in blind despair
Turns to the coffin where her Henry lies—
—'The green earth laughs in vain before his closed
eyes !

The Old Man now hath no more tears to shed—
Wasted are all his groans so long and deep—
He looks as if he car'd not for the dead !
Or thought his Son would soon awake from sleep.

An agony there is that cannot weep,
That glares not on the visage, but is borne
Within the ruin'd spirits dungeon-keep,
In darkness and in silence most forlorn,
Hugging the grave-like gloom, nor wishing for the
morn.

Lo! suddenly he starteth from his knees!
And hurrying up and down, all round the walls
Glances wild looks—and now his pale hands seize,
Just as the light on its expression falls,
Yon picture, whose untroubled face recalls
A smile for ever banish'd from the air!
“O dark! my Boy! are now thy Father's halls!
“But I will hang this silent picture there,
“And morn and night will kneel before it in despair.”

With trembling grasp he lifts the idle gown
Worn by his Son—then closing his dim eyes,
With a convulsive start he flings it down,
Goes and returns, and loads it where it lies
With hurried kisses! Then his glance espies
A letter by that hand now icy-cold
Fill'd full of love, and homebred sympathies;
Naming familiarly both young and old,
And blessing that sweet Home he ne'er was to behold.

And now the Father lays his wither'd hand
Upon a book whose leaves are idly spread :
Gone—gone is he who well could understand
The kingly language of the mighty dead !
—There lies the flute that oft at twilight shed
Airs that beguil'd the old man of his tears ;
But cold the master's touch—his skill is fled,
And all his innocent life at once appears
Like some sweet lovely tune that charm'd in other
years.

But now the door is open'd soft and slow.
“ The hour is come, and all the mourners wait
“ With heads uncover'd in the courts below !”
Stunn'd are the parents with these words of fate,
And bow their heads low down beneath the weight
Of one soul-sickening moment of despair !
Grief cometh deadly when it cometh late,
And with a Fury's hand delights to tear
From Eld's deep-furrow'd front the thin and hoary
hair.

His eyes are open, and with tearless gleam
Fix'd on the coffin ! but they see it not,
Like haunted Guilt blind-walking in a dream,
With soul intent on its own secret blot.

The coffin moves !—yet rooted to the spot,
He sees it borne away, with vacant eyes,
Unconscious what it means ! hath even forgot
The name of Her who in a death-fit lies,—
His heart is turn'd to stone, nor heeds who lives or
dies !

Lo ! now the Pall comes forth into the light
And one chill shudder thrills the weeping crowd !
There is it 'mid the sunshine black as night !
And soon to disappear—a passing cloud !
Grief can no longer bear—but bursts aloud !
Youth, manhood, age, one common nature sways
And hoary heads across the pall are bowed
Near burnish'd locks where youthful beauty plays—
For all alike did love the Form that there decays !

List ! list ! a doleful dirge—a wild death-song !
The coffin now is placed upon its bier,
And through the echoing cloisters borne along !
—How touching those young voices thus to hear
Singing of sorrow, and of mortal fear
To their glad innocence as yet unknown !
Singing they weep—but transient every tear,
Nor may their spirits understand the groan
That age or manhood pours above the funeral stone.

Waileth more dolefully that passing psalm,
At every step they take towards the cell
That calls the coffin to eternal calm !
At each swing of the melancholy bell
More loud the sighing and the sobbing swell,
More ghostly paleness whitens every face !
Slow the procession moves—slow tolls that knell—
But yet the funeral at that solemn pace
Alas ! too soon will reach its final resting-place.

How Vernon lov'd to walk this cloister'd shade
In silent musings, far into the night !
When o'er that Tower the rising Moon display'd
Not purer than his soul her cloudless light.
Still was his lamp-lit window burning bright,
A little earthly star that shone most sweet
To those in heaven—but now extinguish'd quite—
—Fast-chain'd are now those nightly-wand'ring feet
In bonds that none may burst—folds of the winding-
sheet.

Wide is the chapel-gate, and entereth slow
With all its floating pomp that sable pall !
Silent as in a dream the funeral show
(For grief hath breath'd one spirit into all)

Is ranged at once along the gloomy wall !
Ah me ! what mournful lights athwart the gloom,
From yonder richly-pictur'd window fall !
And with a transitory smile illumine
The dim-discover'd depth of that damp breathless
tomb.

All hearts turn shuddering from that gulf profound,
And momentary solace vainly seek
In gazing on the solemn objects round !
Those pictur'd saints with eyes uplifted meek
To the still heavens, how silently they speak
Of faith untroubled, sanctity divine—
While on the paleness of each placid cheek
We seem to see a holy lustre shine
O'er mortal beauty breath'd from an immortal shrine !

What though beneath our feet the earthly mould
Of virtue, beauty, youth, and genius lie
In grim decay ! Yet round us we behold
The cheering emblems of eternity.
What voice divine is theirs ! If soul may die,
And nought its perishable glory save,
Unto yon marble face that to the sky
Looks up with humble hope, what feeling gave
Those smiles that speak of heaven, though kindling
o'er a grave !

O holy image of the Son of God !*
Bearing his cross up toilsome Calvary !
Was that stern path for sinful mortals trod ?
—Methinks from that calm cheek, and pitying eye
Uplifted to that grim and wrathful sky,
(Dim for our sakes with a celestial tear)
Falls a sweet smile where Vernon's relics lie
In mortal stillness on the unmoving bier !
Seeming the bright spring-morn of heaven's eternal
year.

•

—Down, down within oblivion's darksome brink
With lingering motion, as if every hand
Were loth to let the mournful burden sink,
The coffin disappears ! The weeping band,
All round that gulf one little moment stand
In mute and black dismay—and scarcely know
What dire event has happen'd ! the loose sand
From the vault-stone with dull drop sounds below,—
The grave's low hollow voice hath told the tale of woe !

Look for the last time down that cold damp gloom ;
Of those bright letters take a farewell sight !
—Down falls the vault-stone on the yawning tomb,
And all below is sunk in sudden night !

* The Altar Piece.

v

Now is the chapel-aisle with sunshine bright,
The upper world is glad, and fresh and fair,
But that black stone repels the dancing light,—
The beams of heaven must never enter there,
Where by the mould'ring corpse in darkness sits
Despair !

Where now those tears, smiles, motions, looks and tones,
That made our Vernon in his pride of place
So glorious and so fair ! these sullen stones,
Like a frozen sea, lie o'er that beauteous face !
Soon will there be no solitary trace
Of him, his joys, his sadness, or his mirth !
Even now grows dim the memory of that grace
That halo-like shone round the soul of worth !
All fading like a dream ! all vanishing from earth.

Where now the fancies wild—the thoughts benign
That rais'd his soul and purified his heart !
Where now have fled those impulses divine
That taught that gifted youth the Poet's art,
Stealing at midnight with a thrilling start
Into his spirit, wakeful with the pain
Of that mysterious joy ! In darkness part
All the bright hopes, that in a glorious train
Lay round his soul, like clouds that hail the morn-
ing's reign !

Ah me ! can sorrow such fair image bring
Before a mourner's eyes ! Methinks I see,
Laden with all the glories of the spring,
Balm, brightness, music, a resplendent tree,
Waving its blossom'd branches gloriously
Over a sunny garden of delight !
A cold north-wind comes wrathful from the sea,
And there at dawn of day a rueful sight !
As winter brown and sere, the glory once so bright.

I look into the mist of future years,
And gather comfort from the eternal law
That yields up manhood to a host of fears,
To blinded passion, and bewildering awe !
'Th' exulting soul of Vernon never saw
Hope's ghastly visage by 'Truth laugh'd to scorn ;
Imagination had not paus'd to draw
'The gorgeous curtains of Life's sunny morn,
Nor show'd the scenes behind so dismal and for-
lorn.

To thee, my Friend ! as to a shining star
Through the blue depths a cloudless course was given ;
There smil'd thy soul, from earthly vapours far,
Serenely sparkling in its native heaven !

No clouds at last were o'er its beauty driven—
But as aloft it burn'd resplendently,
At once it faded from the face of even,
As oft before the nightly wanderer's eye
A star on which he gaz'd drops sudden from the sky !

Who comes to break my dreams ? The chapel-door
Is opening slow, and that old Man appears
With his long floating locks so silvery-hoar !
His frame is crouching, as if twenty years
Had pass'd in one short day ! There are no tears
On his wan wrinkled face, or hollow eyes !
At last with pain his humbled head he rears,
And asks, while not one grief-chok'd voice replies,
“ Show me the very stone 'neath which my Henry
lies ! ”

He sees the scatter'd dust—and down he falls
Upon that pavement with a shuddering groan—
And with a faltering broken voice he calls
By that dear name upon his buried Son.
Then dumb he lies ! and ever and anon
Fixes his eye-balls with a ghastly glow
On the damp blackness of that hideous stone,
As if he look'd it through, and saw below
The dead face looking up as white as frozen snow !

O gently make way for that Lady fair !
How calm she walks along the solemn aisle !
Beneath the sad grace of that braided hair,
How still her brow ! and what a holy smile !
One start she gives—and stops a little while,
When bow'd by grief her husband's frame appears,
With reverend locks which the hard stones defile !
Then with the only voice that mourner hears,
Lifts up his hoary head and bathes it in her
tears !

At last the funeral party melts away,
And as I look up from the chapel-floor,
No living object can my eyes survey,
Save these two childless Parents at the door,
Flinging back a wild farewell—then seen no more !
And now I hear my own slow footsteps sound
Along the echoing aisle—that tread is o'er—
And as with blinded eyes I turn me round,
The Sexton shuts the gate that stuns with thun-
dering sound !

How fresh and cheerful laughs the open air
To one who has been standing by a tomb !
And yet the beauty that is glistening there
Flings back th' unwilling soul into the gloom.

We turn from walls which dancing rays illume
Unto the darkness where we lately stood,
And still the image of that narrow room
Beneath the sunshine chills our very blood,
With the damp breathless air of mortal solitude.

O band of rosy children shouting loud,
With Morris-dance in honour of the May !
Restrain that laughter ye delighted crowd,
Let one sad hour disturb your holiday.
Ye drop your flowers, and wonder who are they
With garb so black and cheeks of deadly hue !
With one consent then rush again to play,
For what hath Sadness, Sorrow, Death to do,
Beneath that sunny sky with that light-hearted crew !

And now the Parents have left far behind
The gorgeous City with its groves and bowers,
The funeral toll pursues them on the wind,
And looking back, a cloud of thunder lowers
In mortal darkness o'er the shining towers,
That glance like fire at every sunny gleam !
Within that glorious scene, what hideous hours
Dragg'd their dire length ! tower, palace, temple swim,
Before their wilder'd brain—a grand but dreadful
dream !

Say who will greet them at their Castle-gate?
A silent line in sable garb array'd,
The ancient servants of the House will wait !
Up to those woe-worn visages afraid
To lift their gaze ! while on the tower displayed,
A rueful scutcheon meets the Father's eye,
Hung out by death when beauty had decayed,
And sending far into the sunless sky
The mortal gloom that shrouds its dark emblazonry.

Oh ! black as death yon pine-grove on the hill !
Yon waterfall hath now a dismal roar !
Why is that little lake so sadly still,
So dim the flowers and trees along the shore !
'Tis not in vernal sunshine to restore
Their faded beauty, for the source of light
That warm'd the primrose-bank doth flow no more !
Vain Nature's power ! for unto Sorrow's sight
No dewy flower is fair, no blossomy tree is bright.

—Five years have travell'd by—since side by side
That aged pair were laid in holy ground !
With them the very name of Vernon died,
And now it seemeth like an alien sound,
Where once it shed bright smiles and blessings round !

Another race dwell in that ancient Hall,
Nor one memorial of that youth is found
Save his sweet Picture—now unknown to all—
That smiles, and long will smile neglected on the
wall.

But not forgotten in that lofty clime,
Where star-like once thy radiant spirit shone,
Art thou my Vernon ! 'mid those courts sublime
The mournful music of thy name is known.
Oxford still glories in her gifted Son,
And grey-hair'd men who speak of days gone by
Recount what noble palms by him were won,
Describe his step, his mien, his voice, his eye,
Till tears will oft rush in to close his eulogy.

In the dim silence of the Chapel-aisle
His Image stands ! with pale but life-like face !
The cold white marble breathes a heavenly smile,
The still locks cluster with a mournful grace.
O ne'er may time that beauteous bust deface !
There may it smile through ages far away,
On those, who, walking through that holy place,
A moment pause that Image to survey,
And read with soften'd soul the monumental lay.

TO

A SLEEPING CHILD.

ART thou a thing of mortal birth,
Whose happy home is on our earth ?
Does human blood with life imbue
Those wandering veins of heavenly blue,
That stray along thy forehead fair,
Lost 'mid a gleam of golden hair ?
Oh ! can that light and airy breath
Steal from a being doom'd to death ;
Those features to the grave be sent
In sleep thus mutely eloquent ;
Or, art thou, what thy form would seem,
The phantom of a blessed dream ?
A human shape I feel thou art,
I feel it, at my beating heart,

Those tremors both of soul and sense
Awoke by infant innocence !
Though dear the forms by fancy wove,
We love them with a transient love ;
Thoughts from the living world intrude
Even on her deepest solitude :
But, lovely child ! thy magic stole
At once into my inmost soul,
With feelings as thy beauty fair,
And left no other vision there.

To me thy parents are unknown ;
Glad would they be their child to own !
And well they must have loved before,
If since thy birth they loved not more.
Thou art a branch of noble stem,
And, seeing thee, I figure them.
What many a childless one would give,
If thou in their still home wouldst live !
Though in thy face no family-line
Might sweetly say, " This babe is mine !"
In time thou wouldst become the same
As their own child,—all but the name !

How happy must thy parents be
Who daily live in sight of thee !

*Whose hearts no greater pleasure seek
Than see thee smile, and hear thee speak,
And feel all natural griefs beguiled
By thee, their fond, their duteous child.
What joy must in their souls have stirr'd
When thy first broken words were heard,
Words, that, inspired by Heaven, express'd
The transports dancing in thy breast !
As for thy smile !—thy lip, cheek, brow,
Even while I gaze, are kindling now.*

I called thee duteous ; am I wrong ?
No ! truth, I feel, is in my song :
Duteous thy heart's still beatings move
To God, to Nature, and to Love !
To God !—for thou a harmless child
Hast kept his temple undefiled :
To Nature !—for thy tears and sighs
Obey alone her mysteries :
To Love !—for fiends of hate might see
Thou dwell'st in love, and love in thee !
What wonder then, though in thy dreams
Thy face with mystic meaning beams !

Oh ! that my spirit's eye could see
Whence burst those gleams of extacy !

That light of dreaming soul appears
To play from thoughts above thy years.
Thou smil'st as if thy soul were soaring
To Heaven, and Heaven's God adoring !
And who can tell what visions high
May bless an infant's sleeping eye ?
What brighter throne can brightness find
To reign on than an infant's mind,
Ere sin destroy, or error dim,
The glory of the Seraphim ?

But now thy changing smiles express
Intelligible happiness.
I feel my soul thy soul partake.
What grief ! if thou should'st now awake !
With infants happy as thyself
I see thee bound, a playful elf :
I see thou art a darling child
Among thy playmates, bold and wild.
They love thee well ; thou art the queen
Of all their sports, in bower or green ;
And if thou livest to woman's height,
In thee will friendship, love delight.

And live thou surely must ; thy life
Is far too spiritual for the strife

Of mortal pain, nor could disease
Find heart to prey on smiles like these.
Oh ! thou wilt be an angel bright !
To those thou lovest, a saving light !
The staff of age, the help sublime,
Of erring youth, and stubborn prime ;
And when thou goest to Heaven again,
Thy vanishing be like the strain
Of airy harp, so soft the tone
The ear scarce knows when it is gone !

Thrice blessed he ! whose stars design
His spirit pure to lean on thine ;
And watchful share, for days and years,
Thy sorrows, joys, sighs, smiles, and tears !
For good and guiltless as thou art,
Some transient griefs will touch thy heart,
Griefs that along thy alter'd face
Will breathe a more subduing grace,
Than ev'n those looks of joy that lie
On the soft cheek of infancy.
Though looks, God knows, are cradled there
That guilt might cleanse, or sooth despair.

Oh ! vision fair ! that I could be
Again, as young, as pure as thee !

Vain wish ! the rainbow's radiant form
May view, but cannot brave the storm ;
Years can bedim the gorgeous dyes
That paint the bird of paradise,
And years, so fate hath order'd, roll
Clouds o'er the summer of the soul.
Yet, sometimes, sudden sights of grace,
Such as the gladness of thy face,
O sinless babe ! by God are given
To charm the wanderer back to Heaven.

No common impulse hath me led
To this green spot, thy quiet bed,
Where, by mere gladness overcome,
In sleep thou dreamest of thy home.
When to the lake I would have gone,
A wondrous beauty drew me on,
Such beauty as the spirit sees
In glittering fields, and moveless trees,
After a warm and silent shower,
Ere falls on earth the twilight hour.
What led me hither, all can say,
Who, knowing God, his will obey.

Thy slumbers now cannot be long :
Thy little dreams become too strong

For sleep—too like realities :
Soon shall I see those hidden eyes !
Thou wakest, and, starting from the ground,
In dear amazement look'st around ;
Like one who, little given to roam,
Wonders to find herself from home !
But when a stranger meets thy view,
Glistens thine eye with wilder hue.
A moment's thought who I may be,
Blends with thy smiles of courtesy.

Fair was that face as break of dawn,
When o'er its beauty sleep was drawn
Like a thin veil that half-conceal'd
The light of soul, and half-reveal'd.
While thy hush'd heart with visions wrought,
Each trembling eye-lash moved with thought,
And things we dream, but ne'er can speak,
Like clouds came floating o'er thy cheek,
Such summer-clouds as travel light,
When the soul's heaven lies calm and bright ;
Till thou awak'st,—then to thine eye
Thy whole heart leapt in extacy !

And lovely is that heart of thine,
Or sure these eyes could never shine

With such a wild, yet bashful glee,
Gay, half-o'ercome timidity !
Nature has breath'd into thy face
A spirit of unconscious grace ;
A spirit that lies never still,
And makes thee joyous 'gainst thy will.
As, sometimes o'er a sleeping lake
Soft airs a gentle ripling make,
Till, ere we know, the strangers fly,
And water blends again with sky.

Oh ! happy sprite ! didst thou but know
What pleasures through my being flow
From thy soft eyes, a holier feeling
From their blue light could ne'er be stealing,
But thou would'st be more loth to part,
And give me more of that glad heart !
Oh ! gone thou art ! and bearest hence
The glory of thy innocence.
But with deep joy I breathe the air
That kiss'd thy cheek, and fann'd thy hair,
And feel though fate our lives must sever,
Yet shall thy image live for ever !

ADDRESS
TO A
WILD DEER

IN THE FOREST OF DALNESS, GLEN-ETIVE,
ARGYLLSHIRE.

MAGNIFICENT Creature ! so stately and bright !
In the pride of thy spirit pursuing thy flight ;
For what hath the child of the desert to dread,
Wafting up his own mountains that far-beaming
head ;
Or borne like a whirlwind down on the vale ?—
—Hail ! King of the wild and the beautiful !—hail !
Hail ! Idol divine !—whom Nature hath borne
O'er a hundred hill-tops since the mists of the morn,
Whom the pilgrim lone wandering on mountain and
moor,
As the vision glides by him, may blameless adore ;

For the joy of the happy, the strength of the free
Are spread in a garment of glory o'er thee.

Up ! up to yon cliff ! like a King to his throne !
O'er the black silent forest piled lofty and lone—
A throne which the eagle 's glad to resign
Unto footsteps so fleet and so fearless as thine.
There the bright heather springs up in love of thy
breast—

Lo ! the clouds in the depth of the sky are at rest ;
And the race of the wild winds is o'er on the hill !
In the hush of the mountains, ye antlers lie still—
Though your branches now toss in the storm of delight,
Like the arms of the pine on yon shelterless height.
One moment—thou bright Apparition !—delay !
Then melt o'er the crags, like the sun from the day.

Aloft on the weather-gleam, scorning the earth,
The wild spirit hung in majestic mirth :
In dalliance with danger, he bounded in bliss,
O'er the fathomless gloom of each moaning abyss ;
O'er the grim rocks careering with prosperous motion,
Like a ship by herself in full sail o'er the ocean !
Then proudly he turn'd ere he sank to the dell,
And shook from his forehead a haughty farewell,

While his horns in a crescent of radiance shone,
Like a flag burning bright when the vessel is gone.

The ship of the desert hath pass'd on the wind,
And left the dark ocean of mountains behind !
But my spirit will* travel wherever she flee,
And behold her in pomp o'er the rim of the sea—
Her voyage pursue—till her anchor be cast
In some cliff-girdled haven of beauty at last.

What lonely magnificence stretches around !
Each sight how sublime ! and how awful each sound !
All hush'd and serene, as a region of dreams,
The mountains repose 'mid the roar of the streams,
Their glens of black umbrage by cataracts riven,
But calm their blue tops in the beauty of Heaven.
Here the glory of nature hath nothing to fear—
—Aye ! Time the destroyer in power hath been here ;
And the forest that hung on yon mountain so high,
Like a black thunder cloud on the arch of the sky,
Hath gone, like that cloud, when the tempest came
by.

Deep sunk in the black moor, all worn and decay'd,
Where the floods have been raging, the limbs are
display'd

Of the Pine-tree and Oak sleeping vast in the
gloom,
The kings of the forest disturb'd in their tomb.

E'en now, in the pomp of their prime, I behold
O'erhanging the desert the forests of old !
So gorgeous their verdure, so solemn their shade,
Like the heavens above them, they never may fade.
The sunlight is on them—in silence they sleep—
A glimmering glow, like the breast of the deep,
When the billows scarce heave in the calmness of
morn.

—Down the pass of Glen-Etive the tempest is
borne,
And the hill side is swinging, and roars with a sound
In the heart of the forest embosom'd profound.
Till all in a moment the tumult is o'er,
And the mountain of thunder is still as the shore
When the sea is at ebb ; not a leaf nor a breath
To disturb the wild solitude, steadfast as death.

From his eyrie the eagle hath soar'd with a scream,
And I wake on the edge of the cliff from my dream ;
—Where now is the light of thy far-beaming brow ?
Fleet son of the wilderness ! where art thou now ?

—Again o'er yon crag thou return'st to my sight,
Like the horns of the moon from a cloud of the night !
Serene on thy travel—as soul in a dream—
Thou needest no bridge o'er the rush of the stream.
With thy presence the pine-grove is fill'd, as with
light,
And the caves, as thou passest, one moment are bright.
Through the arch of the rainbow that lies on the rock
'Mid the mist stealing up from the cataract's shock,
Thou fling'st thy bold beauty, ~~and~~ exulting and free,
O'er a pit of grim blackness, that roars like the sea.

His voyage is o'er !—As if struck by a spell
He motionless stands in the hush of the dell,
There softly and slowly sinks down on his breast,
In the midst of his pastime enamour'd of rest.
A stream in a clear pool that endeth its race—
A dancing ray chain'd to one sunshiny place—
A cloud by the winds to calm solitude driven—
A hurricane dead in the silence of heaven !

Fit couch of repose for a pilgrim like thee !
Magnificent prison enclosing the free !
With rock-wall encircled—with precipice crown'd—
Which, awoke by the sun, thou can'st clear at a
bound.

'Mid the fern and the heather kind Nature doth keep
One bright spot of green for her favourite's sleep ;
And close to that covert, as clear as the skies
When their blue depths are cloudless, a little lake lies,
Where the creature at rest can his image behold
Looking up through the radiance, as bright and as
bold !

How lonesome ! how wild ! yet the wildness is rife
With the stir of enjoyment—the spirit of life.
The glad fish leaps up in the heart of the lake,
Whose depths, at the sullen plunge, sullenly quake !
Elate on the fern-branch the grasshopper sings,
And away in the midst of his roundelay springs ;
'Mid the flowers of the heath, not more bright than
himself,

The wild-bee is busy, a musical elf—
Then starts from his labour, unwearied and gay,
And, circling the antlers, booms far far away.
While high up the mountains, in silence remote,
The cuckoo unseen is repeating his note,
And mellowing echo, on watch in the skies,
Like a voice from some loftier climate replies.
With wide-branching antlers a guard to his breast,
There lies the wild Creature, even stately in rest !
'Mid the grandeur of nature, compos'd and serene,
And proud in his heart of the mountainous scene,

He lifts his calm eye to the eagle and raven,
At noon sinking down on smooth wings to their haven,
As if in his soul the bold Animal smil'd
To his friends of the sky, the joint-heirs of the wild.

Yes! fierce looks thy nature, ev'n hush'd in repose—
In the depth of thy desert regardless of foes.
Thy bold antlers call on the hunter afar
With a haughty defiance to come to the war!
No outrage is war to a creature like thee!
The bugle-horn fills thy wild spirit with glee,
As thou bearest thy neck on the wings of the wind,
And the laggardly gaze-hound is toiling behind.
In the beams of thy forehead that glitter with death,
In feet that draw power from the touch of the heath,—
In the wide-raging torrent that lends thee its roar,—
In the cliff that once trod must be trodden no more,—
'Thy trust—'mid the dangers that threaten thy reign!
—But what if the stag on the mountain be slain?
On the brink of the rock—lo! he standeth at bay
Like a victor that falls at the close of the day—
While hunter and hound in their terror retreat
From the death that is spurn'd from his furious feet:
And his last cry of anger comes back from the skies,
As nature's fierce son in the wilderness dies.

High life of a hunter ! he meets on the hill
The new waken'd daylight, so bright and so still ;
And feels, as the clouds of the morning unroll,
The silence, the splendour, ennoble his soul.
'Tis his o'er the mountains to stalk like a ghost,
Enshrouded with mist, in which nature is lost,
Till he lifts up his eyes, and flood, valley, and height,
In one moment all swim in an ocean of light ;
While the sun, like a glorious banner unfurl'd,
Seems to wave o'er a new, more magnificent world.
'Tis his—by the mouth of some cavern his seat—
The lightning of heaven to hold at his feet,
While the thunder below him that growls from the
cloud,
To him comes on echo more awfully loud.
When the clear depth of noon-tide, with glittering
motion,
O'erflows the lone glens—an aërial ocean—
When the earth and the heavens, in union profound,
Lie blended in beauty that knows not a sound—
As his eyes in the sunshiny solitude close
'Neath a rock of the desert in dreaming repose,
He sees, in his slumbers, such visions of old
As his wild Gaelic songs to his infancy told ;
O'er the mountains a thousand plum'd hunters are borne,
And he starts from his dream at the blast of the horn.

Yes! child of the desert! fit quarry were thou
For the hunter that came with a crown on his brow,—
By princes attended with arrow and spear,
In their white-tented camp, for the warfare of deer.
In splendour the tents on the green summit stood,
And brightly they shone from the glade in the wood,
And, silently built by a magical spell,
The pyramid rose in the depth of the dell.
All mute was the palace of Lochy that day,
When the king and his nobles—a gallant array—
To Gleno or Glen-Etive came forth in their pride,
And a hundred fierce stags in their solitude died.
Not lonely and single they pass'd o'er the height—
But thousands swept by in their hurricane-flight;
And bow'd to the dust in their trampling tread
Was the plumage on many a warrior's head.
—“ Fall down on your faces!—the herd is at hand!”
—And onwards they came like the sea o'er the sand;
Like the snow from the mountain when loosen'd by
rain,
And rolling along with a crash to the plain;
Like a thunder-split oak-tree, that falls in one shock
With his hundred wide arms from the top of the rock,
Like the voice of the sky, when the black cloud is near,
So sudden, so loud, came the tempest of Deer.

Wild mirth of the desert ! fit pastime for kings !
Which still the rude Bard in his solitude sings.
Oh reign of magnificence ! vanish'd for ever !
Like music dried up in the bed of a river,
Whose course hath been chang'd ! yet my soul can
 survey
The clear cloudless morn of that glorious day.
Yes ! the wide silent forest is loud as of yore,
And the far-ebbed grandeur rolls back to the shore.

I wake from my trance !—lo ! the Sun is declining !
And the Black-mount afar in his lustre is shining,
—One soft golden gleam ere the twilight prevail !
Then down let me sink to the cot in the dale,
Where sings the fair maid to the viol so sweet,
Or the floor is alive with her white twinkling feet.
Down, down like a bird to the depth of the dell !
—Vanish'd Creature ! I bid thy fair image farewell !

A

LAY OF FAIRY LAND.

It is upon the Sabbath-day, at rising of the sun,
That to Glenmore's black forest-side a Shepherdess
hath gone,
From eagle and from raven to guard her little flock,
And read her Bible as she sits on greensward or on
rock.

Her Widow-mother wept to hear her whispered prayer
so sweet,
Then through the silence bless'd the sound of her
soft parting feet ;
And thought, " while thou art praising God amid
the hills so calm,
Far off this broken voice, my child ! will join the
morning psalm."

So down upon her rushy couch her moisten'd cheek
she laid,
And away into the morning hush is flown her High-
land Maid ;
In heaven the stars are all bedim'd, but in its dewy
mirth
A star more beautiful than they is shining on the
earth.

—In the deep mountain-hollow the dreamy day is
done,
For close the peace of Sabbath brings the rise and
set of sun ;
The mother through her lowly door looks forth unto
the green,
Yet the shadow of her Shepherdess is no where to
be seen.

Within her loving bosom, stirs one faint throb of
fear—
“ Oh ! why so late ! ” a footstep—and she knows her
child is near ;
So out into the evening the gladden'd mother
goes,
And between her and the crimson light her daugh-
ter's beauty glows.

The heather-balm is fragrant—the heather-bloom
is fair,

But 'tis neither heather-balm nor bloom that wreathes
round Mhairi's hair ;

Round her white brows so innocent, and her blue
quiet eyes,

That look out bright, in smiling light, beneath the
flowery dies.

These flowers by far too beautiful among our hills
to grow,

These gem-crowned stalks too tender to bear one
flake of snow,

Not all the glens of Caledon could yield so bright a
band,

That in its lustre breathes and blooms of some warm
foreign land.

“ The hawk hath long been sleeping upon the pil-
lar-stone,

And what hath kept my Mhairi in the moorlands all
alone ?

And where got she those lovely flowers mine old eyes
dimly see ?

Where'er they grew, it must have been upon a lovely
tree.”

“ Sit down beneath our elder-shade, and I my tale
will tell”—

And speaking, on her mother's lap the wondrous
chaplet fell ;

It seemed as if its blissful breath did her worn heart
restore,

Till the faded eyes of age did beam as they had
beamed of yore.

“ The day was something dim—but the gracious
sunshine fell

On me, and on my sheep and lambs, and our own
little dell ;

Some lay down in the warmth, and some began to
feed,

And I took out the Holy Book, and thereupon did
read.

“ And while that I was reading of Him who for us
died,

And blood and water shed for us from out his bless-
ed side,

An angel's voice above my head came singing o'er
and o'er,

In Abernethy-wood it sank, now rose in dark Glen-
more.

“ Mid lonely hills, on Sabbath, all by myself, to
hear
That voice, unto my beating heart did bring a joy-
ful fear ;
For well I knew the wild song that wavered o’er my
head,
Must be from some celestial thing, or from the hap-
py dead.

“ I looked up from my Bible—and lo ! before me
stood,
In her green graceful garments, the Lady of the
Wood ;
Silent she was and motionless, but when her eyes met
mine,
I knew she came to do me good, her smile was so
divine.

“ She laid her hand as soft as light upon your daugh-
ter’s hair,
And up that white arm flowed my heart into her bo-
som fair ;
And all at once I loved her well as she my mate had
been,
Though she had come from Fairy-Land and was the
Fairy-Queen.”

Then started Mhairi's mother at that wild word of
fear,
For a daughter had been lost to her for many a hope-
less year ;
The child had gone at sunrise among the hills to
roam,
But many a sunset since had been, and none hath
brought her home.

Some thought that Fhaum, the Savage shape that on
the mountain dwells,
Had somewhere left her lying dead among the heath-
er-bells,
And others said the River red had caught her in her
glee,
And her fair body swept unseen into the unseen
Sea.

But thoughts come to a mother's breast a mother only
knows,
And grief, although it never dies, in fancy finds re-
pose ;
By day she feels the dismal truth that death has
ta'en her child,
At night she hears her singing still and dancing o'er
the wild.

And then her Country's legends lend all their lovely
faith,

Till sleep reveals a silent land, but not a land of
death—

Where, happy in her innocence, her living child doth
play

With those fair Elves that wafted her from her own
world away.

“ Look not so mournful mother ! 'tis not a Tale of
woe—

The Fairy-Queen stoop'd down and left a kiss upon
my brow,

And faster than mine own two doves e'er stoop'd unto
my hand,

Our flight was through the ether—then we dropt on
Fairy-Land.

“ Along a river-side that ran wide-winding thro' a
wood,

We walked, the Fairy-Queen and I, in loving soli-
tude ;

And there serenely on the trees, in all their rich at-
tire,

Sat crested birds whose plumage seem'd to burn with
harmless fire.

“ No sound was in our steps,—as on the ether mute—
For the velvet moss lay greenly deep beneath the
gliding foot,
Till we came to a Waterfall, and mid the Rainbows
there,
The Mermaids and the Fairies played in Water and
in Air.

“ And sure there was sweet singing, for it at once
did breathe
From all the Woods and Waters, and from the Caves
beneath,
But when those happy creatures beheld their lovely
Queen,
The music died away at once, as if it ne’er had
been,—

“ And hovering in the Rainbow, and floating on the
Wave,
Each little head so beautiful some shew of homage
gave,
And bending down bright lengths of hair that glis-
ten’d in its dew,
Seemed as the Sun ten thousand rays against the
Water threw.

“ Soft the music rose again—but we left it far behind,

Though strains o’ertook us now and then, on some small breath of wind ;

Our guide into that brightning bliss was aye that brightning stream,

Till lo ! a Palace silently unfolded like a dream.

“ Then thought I of the lovely tales, and music lovelier still,

My elder sister used to sing at evening on the Hill,
When I was but a little child too young to watch the sheep,

And on her kind knees laid my head in very joy to sleep.

“ Tales of the silent people, and their green silent Land !

—But the gates of that bright Palace did suddenly expand,

And filled with green-robed Fairies was seen an ample hall,

Where she who held my hand in hers was the loveliest of them all.

“ Round her in happy heavings, flowed that bright
glistening crowd,
Yet though a thousand voices hailed, the murmur
was not loud,
And o’er their plumed and flowery heads there sang
a whispering breeze,
When as before their Queen all sank, down slowly
on their knees.

“ Then,” said the Queen, “ seven years to-day since
mine own infant’s birth—
And we must send her Nourice this evening back to
earth ;
Though sweet her home beneath the sun—far other
home than this—
So I have brought her sister small, to see her in her
bliss.

“ Luhana ! bind thy frontlet upon my Mhairi’s brow,
That she on earth may shew the flowers that in our
gardens grow.”
And from the heavenly odours breathed around my
head I knew
How delicate must be their shape, how beautiful
their hue !

“ Then near and nearer still I heard small peals of
laughter sweet,
And the infant Fay came dancing in with her white-
twinkling feet,
While in green rows the smiling Elves fell back on
either side,
And up that avenue the Fay did like a sun-beam
glide.

“ But who came then into the Hall? One long since
mourned as dead !
Oh ! never had the mould been strewn o’er such a
star-like head !
On me alone she poured her voice, on me alone her
eyes,
And, as she gazed, I thought upon the deep-blue
cloudless skies.

“ Well knew I my fair sister ! and her unforgotten
face !
Strange meeting one so beautiful in that bewildering
place !
And like two solitary rills that by themselves flowed
on,
And had been long divided—we melted into one.

“ When that the shower was all wept out of our delightful tears,
And love rose in our hearts that had been buried there for years,
You well may think another shower straightway began to fall,
Even for our mother and our home to leave that heavenly Hall !

“ I may not tell the sobbing and weeping that was there,
And how the mortal Nourice left her Fairy in despair,
But promised, duly every year, to visit the sad child,
As soon as by our forest-side the first pale primrose smiled.

“ While they two were embracing, the Palace it was gone,
And I and my dear sister stood by the Great Burial-stone ;
While both of us our river saw in twilight glimmering by,
And knew at once the dark Cairngorm in his own silent sky.”

The Child hath long been speaking to one who may
not hear,
For a deadly Joy, came suddenly upon a deadly
Fear,
And though the Mother fell not down, she lay on
Mhairi's breast,
And her face was white as that of one whose soul
has gone to rest.

She sits beneath the Elder-shade in that long mortal
swoon,
And piteously on her wan cheek looks down the gentle
Moon ;
And when her senses are restored, whom sees she at
her side,
But Her believed in childhood to have wandered off
and died !

In these small hands, so lily-white, is water from the
spring,
And a grateful coolness drops from it as from an angel's
wing,
And to her Mother's pale lips her rosy lips are laid,
While these long soft eye-lashes drop tears on her
hoary head.

She stirs not in her Child's embrace, but yields her
old grey hairs
Unto the heavenly dew of tears, the heavenly breath
of prayers—
No voice hath she to bless her child, till that strong
fit go by,
But gazeth on the long-lost face, and then upon the
sky.

The Sabbath-morn was beautiful—and the long Sabbath-day—
The Evening-star rose beautiful when day-light died
away ;
Morn, day, and twilight, this lone Glen flowed over
with delight,
But the fulness of all mortal Joy hath blessed the
Sabbath-night.

A

CHURCH-YARD SCENE.

How sweet and solemn, all alone,
With reverend steps, from stone to stone
In a small village church-yard lying,
O'er intervening flowers to move !
And as we read the names unknown
Of young and old to judgment gone,
And hear in the calm air above
Time onwards softly flying,
To meditate, in Christian love,
Upon the dead and dying !
Across the silence seem to go .
With dream-like motion, wavering, slow,
And shrouded in their folds of snow,
The friends we loved long long ago !

Gliding across the sad retreat,
How beautiful their phantom feet !
What tenderness is in their eyes,
Turned where the poor survivor lies
'Mid monitory sanctities !
What years of vanished joy are fanned
From one uplifting of that hand
In its white stillness ! when the Shade
Doth glimmeringly in sunshine fade
From our embrace, how dim appears
This world's life through a mist of tears !
Vain hopes ! blind sorrows ! needless fears !

Such is the scene around me now :
A little Church-yard on the brow
Of a green pastoral hill ;
Its sylvan village sleeps below,
And faintly here is heard the flow
Of Woodburn's summer rill ;
A place where all things mournful meet,
And yet the sweetest of the sweet,
The stillest of the still !
With what a pensive beauty fall
Across the mossy mouldering wall
That rose-tree's clustered arches ! See
The robin-redbreast warily,

Bright through the blossoms, leaves his nest :
Sweet ingrate ! through the winter blest
At the firesides of men—but shy
Through all the sunny summer-hours,
He hides himself among the flowers
In his own wild festivity.
What lulling sound, and shadow cool
Hangs half the darkened church-yard o'er,
From thy green depths so beautiful
Thou gorgeous sycamore !
Oft hath the holy wine and bread
Been blest beneath thy murmuring tent,
Where many a bright and hoary head
Bowed at that awful sacrament.
Now all beneath the turf are laid
On which they sat, and sang, and prayed.
Above that consecrated tree
Ascends the tapering spire that seems
To lift the soul up silently
To heaven with all its dreams,
While in the belfry, deep and low,
From his heaved bosom's purple gleams
The dove's continuous murmurs flow,
A dirge-like song, half-bliss, half-woe,
The voice so lonely seems !

THE WIDOW.

THE courtly hall is gleaming bright
 With fashion's graceful throng—
 All hearts are chain'd in still delight,
 For like the heaven-borne voice of night
 Breathes Handel's sacred song.
 Nor on my spirit melts in vain
 The deep—the wild—the mournful strain
 That fills the echoing hall
 (Though many a callous soul be there)
 With sighs, and sobs, and cherish'd pain—
 —While on a face, as Seraph's fair,
 Mine eyes in sadness fall.

Not those the tears that smiling flow
 As fancied sorrow bleeds,
 Like dew upon the rose's glow ;
 —That Lady 'mid the glitt'ring show
 Is cloth'd in widow's weeds.

She sits in reverie profound,
And drinks and lives upon the sound,
As if she ne'er would wake !
Her clos'd eyes cannot hold the tears
That tell what dreams her soul have bound—
In memory they of other years
For a dead husband's sake.

Methinks her inmost soul lies spread
Before my tearful sight—
A garden whose best flowers are dead,
A sky still fair (though darkened)
With hues of lingering light.
I see the varying feelings chase
Each other o'er her pallid face,
From shade to deepest gloom.
She thinks on living objects dear,
And pleasure lends a cheerful grace ;
But oh ! that look so dim and drear,
—Her heart is in the tomb.

Rivalling the tender crescent Moon
The Star of evening shines—
A warm, still, balmy night of June,
Low-murmuring with a fitful tune
From yonder grove of pines.

In the silence of that starry sky,
Exchanging vows of constancy,
Two happy lovers stray.
—To her how sad and strange ! to know,
In darkness while the phantoms fade,
That one a widow'd wretch is now,
The other in the clay.

A wilder gleam disturbs her eye.
Oh ! hush the deep'ning strain !
And must the youthful Warrior die ?
A gorgeous funeral passes by,
The dead-march stuns her brain.
The singing voice she hears no more,
Across his grave the thunders roar !
How weeps yon gallant band
O'er him their valour could not save !
For the bayonet is red with gore,
And he, the beautiful and brave,
Now sleeps in Egypt's sand.

But far away in cloud and mist
The ghastly vision swims.
—Unto that dying cadence list !
She thinks the voices of the blest
Now chaunt their evening hymns.

*O for a dove's unwearied wing,
That she might fly where angels sing
Around the judgment-seat ;
That Spirit pure to kiss again,
And smile at earthly sorrowing !
Wash'd free from every mortal stain,
At Jesus' blessed feet.*

How longs her spirit to recall
That prayer so vain and wild !
For, idly-wandering round the Hall,
Her eyes are startled as they fall
On her own beauteous Child.
Gazing on one so good and fair,
Less mournful breathes that holy air,
And almost melts to mirth :
Pleas'd will she sojourn here a while,
And see, beneath her pious care,
In heaven's most gracious sunshine smile
The sweetest Flower on earth.

The song dies 'mid the silent strings,
And the Hall is now alive
With a thousand gay and fluttering things ;
—The noise to her a comfort brings,
Her heart and soul revive.

With solemn pace and loving pride
She walks by her fair daughter's side,
Who views with young delight
The gaudy sparkling revelry,—
Unconscious that from far and wide
On her is turn'd each charmed eye—
—The Beauty of the night !

A Spirit she ! and Joy her name !
She walks upon the air ;
Grace swims throughout her fragile frame,
And glistens like a lambent flame
Amid her golden hair.
Her eyes are of the heavenly blue,
A cloudless twilight bathed in dew ;
The blushes on her cheek,
Like the roses of the vernal year
That lend the virgin snow their hue—
—And oh ! what pure delight to hear
The gentle Vision speak !

Yet dearer than that rosy glow
To me yon cheek so wan ;
Lovely I thought it long ago,
But lovelier far now blanch'd with woe
Like the breast-down of the swan.

Then worship ye the sweet—the young—
Hang on the witchcraft of her tongue,
Wild-murmuring like the lute.
On thee, O Lady ! let me gaze,
Thy soul is now a lyre unstrung,
But I hear the voice of other days,
Though these pale lips be mute.

Lovely thou art ! yet none may dare
That placid soul to move.
Most beautiful thy braided hair,
But awful holiness breathes there
Unmeet for earthly love.
More touching far than deep distress
Thy smiles of languid happiness,
That like the gleams of Even
O'er thy calm cheek serenely play.
—Thus at the silent hour we bless,
Unmindful of the joyous day,
The still sad face of Heaven.

HYMN TO SPRING.

How beautiful the pastime of the Spring !
Lo ! newly waking from her wintry dream,
She, like a smiling infant, timid plays
On the green margin of this sunny lake,
Fearing, by starts, the little breaking waves
(If riplings rather known by sound than sight
May haply so be named) that in the grass
Soon fade in murmuring mirth ; now seeming proud
To venture round the edge of yon far point,
That from an eminence softly sinking down,
Doth from the wide and homeless waters shape
A scene of tender, delicate repose,
Fit haunt for thee, in thy first hours of joy,
Delightful Spring !—nor less an emblem fair,
Like thee, of beauty, innocence, and youth.

On such a day, 'mid such a scene as this,
Methinks the poets who in lovely hymns

Have sung thy reign, sweet Power, and wished it long,
In their warm hearts conceived those eulogies
That, lending to the world inanimate
A pulse and spirit of life, for aye preserve
The sanctity of Nature, and embalm
Her fleeting spectacles in memory's cell
In spite of time's mutations. Onwards roll
The circling seasons, and as each gives birth
To dreams peculiar, yea destructive oft
Of former feelings, in oblivion's shade
Sleep the fair visions of forgotten hours.
But Nature calls the poet to her aid,
And in his lays beholds her glory live
For ever. Thus, in winter's deepest gloom,
When all is dim before the outward eye,
Nor the ear catches one delightful sound,
They who have wander'd in their musing walks
With the great poets, in their spirits feel
No change on earth, but see the unalter'd woods
Laden with beauty, and inhale the song
Of birds, airs, echoes, and of vernal showers.

So hath it been with me, delightful Spring !
And now I hail thee as a friend who pays
An annual visit, yet whose image lives

From parting to return, and who is blest
Each time with blessings warmer than before.

Oh ! gracious Power ! for thy beloved approach
The expecting earth lay wrapt in kindling smiles,
Struggling with tears, and often overcome.
A blessing sent before thee from the heavens,
A balmy spirit breathing tenderness,
Prepared thy way, and all created things
Felt that the angel of delight was near.
Thou camest at last, and such a heavenly smile
Shone round thee, as beseem'd the eldest-born
Of Nature's guardian spirits. The great Sun,
Scattering the clouds with a resistless smile,
Came forth to do thee homage ; a sweet hymn
Was by the low Winds chaunted in the sky ;
And when thy feet descended on the earth,
Scarce could they move amid the clustering flowers
By Nature strewn o'er valley, hill, and field,
'To hail her blest deliverer !—Ye fair Trees,
How are ye changed, and changing while I gaze !
It seems as if some gleam of verdant light
Fell on you from a rainbow ; but it lives
Amid your tendrils, brightening every hour
Into a deeper radiance. Ye sweet Birds,
Were you asleep through all the wintry hours,

Beneath the waters, or in mossy caves ?
There are, 'tis said, birds that pursue the spring,
Where'er she flies, or else in death-like sleep
Abide her annual reign, when forth they come
With freshen'd plumage and enraptured song,
As ye do now, unwearied choristers,
Till the land ring with joy. Yet are ye not,
Sporting in tree and air, more beautiful
Than the young lambs, that from the valley-side
Send a soft bleating like an infant's voice,
Half happy, half afraid ! O blessed things !
At sight of this your perfect innocence,
The sterner thoughts of manhood melt away
Into a mood as mild as woman's dreams.
The strife of working intellect, the stir
Of hopes ambitious ; the disturbing sound
Of fame, and all that worshipp'd pageantry
That ardent spirits burn for in their pride,
Fly like disparting clouds, and leave the soul
Pure and serene as the blue depths of heaven.

Now, is the time in some meek solitude
To hold communion with those innocent thoughts
That bless'd our earlier days ;—to list the voice
Of Conscience murmuring from her inmost shrine,
And learn if still she sing the quiet tune

That fill'd the ear of youth. If then we feel,
That 'mid the powers, the passions, and desires
Of riper age, we still have kept our hearts
Free from pollution, and 'mid tempting scenes
Walk'd on with pure and unreprieved steps,
Fearless of guilt, as if we knew it not ;
Ah me ! with what a new sublimity
Will the green hills lift up their sunny heads,
Ourselves as stately : Smiling will we gaze
On the clouds whose happy home is in the heavens :
Nor envy the clear streamlet that pursues
His course 'mid flowers and music to the sea.
But dread the beauty of a vernal day,
'Thou trembler before memory ! To the saint
What sight so lovely as the angel form
That smiles upon his sleep ! The sinner veils
His face ashamed,—unable to endure
The upbraiding silence of the seraph's eyes !—

Yet awful must it be, even to the best
And wisest man, when he beholds the sun
Prepared once more to run his annual round
Of glory and of love, and thinks that God
To him, though sojourning' in earthly shades,
Hath also given an orbit, whence his light
May glad the nations, or at least diffuse .

Peace and contentment over those he loves !
His soul expanded by the breath of Spring,
With holy confidence the thoughtful man
Renews his vows to virtue,—vows that bind
To purest motives and most useful deeds.
Thus solemnly doth pass the vernal day,
In abstinence severe from worldly thoughts ;
Lofty disdainings of all trivial joys
Or sorrows ; meditations long and deep
On objects fit for the immortal love
Of souls immortal ; weeping penitence
For duties (plain though highest duties be)
Despised or violated ; humblest vows,
Though humble strong as death, henceforth to walk
Elate in innocence ; and, holier still,
Warm gushings of his spirit unto God
For all his past existence, whether bright,
As the spring landscape sleeping in the sun,
Or dim and desolate like a wintry sea
Stormy and boding storms ! Oh ! such will be
Frequent and long his musings, till he feels
As all the stir subsides, like busy day
Soft-melting into eve's tranquillity,
How blest is peace when born within the soul.

And therefore do I sing these pensive hymns,
O Spring ! to thee, though thou by some art call'd

Parent of mirth and rapture, worshipp'd best
With festive dances and a choral song.
No melancholy man am I, sweet Spring !
Who, filling all things with his own poor griefs,
Sees nought but sadness in the character
Of universal Nature, and who weaves
Most doleful ditties in the midst of joy.
Yet knowing something, dimly though it be,
And therefore still more awful, of that strange
And most tumultuous thing, the heart of man,
It chanceth oft, that mix'd with Nature's smiles
My soul beholds a solemn quietness
That almost looks like grief, as if on earth
There were no perfect joy, and happiness
Still trembled on the brink of misery !

Yea ! mournful thoughts like these even now arise,
While Spring, like Nature's smiling infancy,
Sports round me, and all images of peace
Seem native to this earth, nor other home
Desire or know. Yet doth a mystic chain
Link in our hearts foreboding fears of death
With every loveliest thing that seems to us
Most deeply fraught with life. Is there a child
More beautiful than its playmates, even more pure
Than they? while gazing on its face, we think

That one so fair most surely soon will die !
Such are the fears now beating at my heart.
Ere long, sweet Spring ! amid forgotten things
Thou and thy smiles must sleep : thy little lambs
Dead, or their nature changed ; thy hymning birds
Mute ;—faded every flower so beautiful ;—
And all fair symptoms of incipient life
To fulness swollen, or sunk into decay !

Such are the melancholy dreams that filled
In the elder time the songs of tenderest bards,
Whene'er they named the Spring. Thence, doubts
and fears
Of what might be the final doom of man ;
Till all things spoke to their perplexed souls
The language of despair ; and, mournful sight !
Even hope lay prostrate upon beauty's grave !—
Vain fears of death ! breath'd forth in deathless lays !
O foolish bards, immortal in your works,
Yet trustless of your immortality !
Not now are they whom Nature calls her bards
Thus daunted by the image of decay.
They have their tears, and oft they shed them too,
By reason unreproach'd ; but on the pale
Cold cheek of death, they see a spirit smile,

Bright and still brightening, even like thee, O Spring!
Stealing in beauty through the winter snow !—

Season, beloved of Heaven ! my hymn is closed !
And thou, sweet Lake ! on whose retired banks
I have so long reposed, yet in the depth
Of meditation scarcely seen thy waves,
Farewell !—the voice of worship and of praise
Dies on my lips, yet shall my heart preserve
Inviolate the spirit whence it sprung !
Even as a harp, when some wild plaintive strain
Goes with the hand that touch'd it, still retains
The soul of music sleeping in its strings.

THE
VOICE
OF
DEPARTED FRIENDSHIP.

I HAD a Friend who died in early youth !
—And often in those melancholy dreams,
When my soul travels through the umbrage deep
That shades the silent world of memory,
Methinks I hear his voice ! Sweet as the breath
Of balmy ground-flowers stealing from some spot
Of sunshine sacred, in a gloomy wood,
To everlasting spring.

In the church-yard
Where now he sleeps—the day before he died,
Silent we sat together on a grave ;
Till gently laying his pale hand on mine,
Pale in the moonlight that was coldly sleeping

On heaving sod and marble monument,—

This was the music of his last farewell !

“ Weep not my brother ! though thou seest me led

“ By short and easy stages, day by day,

“ With motion almost imperceptible

“ Into the quiet grave. God’s will be done.

“ Even when a boy, in doleful solitude

“ My soul oft sat within the shadow of death !

“ And when I look’d along the laughing earth,

“ Up the blue heavens, and through the middle air

“ Joyfully ringing with the sky-lark’s song,

“ I wept ! and thought how sad for one so young

“ To bid farewell to so much happiness.

“ But Christ hath call’d me from this lower world,

“ Delightful though it be—and when I gaze

“ On the green earth and all its happy hills,

“ ’Tis with such feelings as a man beholds

“ A little Farm which he is doom’d to leave

“ On an appointed day. Still more and more

“ He loves it as that mournful day draws near,

“ But hath prepar’d his heart—and is resign’d.”

—Then lifting up his radiant eyes to heaven,

He said with fervent voice—“ O what were life

“ Even in the warm and summer-light of joy

“ Without those hopes, that like refreshing gales

“ At evening from the sea, come o’er the soul

“ Breath’d from the ocean of eternity.
“ —And oh! without them who could bear the storms
“ That fall in roaring blackness o’er the waters
“ Of agitated life! Then hopes arise
“ All round our sinking souls, like those fair birds
“ O’er whose soft plumes the tempest hath no power,
“ Waving their snow-white wings amid the darkness,
“ And wiling us with gentle motion, on
“ To some calm island! on whose silvery strand
“ Dropping at once, they fold their silent pinions,—
“ And as we touch the shores of paradise
“ In love and beauty walk around our feet!”

LORD RONALD'S CHILD.

THREE days ago Lord Ronald's child
Was singing o'er the mountain-wild,
Among the sunny showers
That brought the rainbow to her sight,
And bathed her footsteps in the light
Of purple heather-flowers. .
But chilly came the evening's breath—
The silent dew was cold with death—
She reached her home with pain ;
And from the bed where now she lies,
With snow-white face and closed eyes,
She ne'er must rise again.

Still is she as a frame of stone,
That in its beauty lies alone,
With silence breathing from its face,
For ever in some holy place !

Chapel or aisle ! on marble laid—
With pale hands o'er its pale breast spread—
An image humble, meek, and low,
Of one forgotten long ago !

Soft feet are winding up the stair—
And lo ! a Vision passing fair !
All dress'd in white—a mournful show—
A band of orphan children come,
With footsteps like the falling snow,
To bear to her eternal home
The gracious Lady who look'd down
With smiles on their forlorn estate—
—But Mercy up to heaven is gone,
And left the friendless to their fate.

They pluck the honeysuckle's bloom,
That through the window fills the room
With mournful odours—and the rose
That in its innocent beauty glows,
Leaning its dewy golden head
Towards the pale face of the dead,
Weeping like a thing forsaken
Unto eyes that will not waken.

All bathed in pity's gentle showers
They place these melancholy flowers

Upon the cold white breast !
And there they lie ! profoundly calm !
Ere long to fill with fading balm
A place of deeper rest !

By that fair Band the bier is borne
Into the open light of morn,—
And, till the parting dirge be said,
Upon a spot of sunshine laid
Beneath a grove of trees !
Bowed and uncovered every head,
Bright-tressed youth, and hoary age—
—Then suddenly before the dead
Lord Ronald's gather'd vassalage
Fall down upon their knees !

Glen-Etive and its mountains lie
All silent as the depth profound
Of that unclouded sunbright sky—
—Low heard the melancholy sound
Of waters murmuring by.
—Glides softly from the orphan-band
A weeping Child, and takes her stand
Close to the Lady's feet,
Then wildly sings a funeral hymn !
With overflowing eyes and dim
Fix'd on the winding-sheet !

HYMN.

O beautiful the streams
That through our vallies run,
Singing and dancing in the gleams
Of summer's cloudless sun.

The sweetest of them all
From its fairy banks is gone ;
And the music of the waterfall
Hath left the silent stone !

Up among the mountains
In soft and mossy cell,
By the silent springs and fountains
The happy wild-flowers dwell.

The queen-rose of the wilderness
Hath wither'd in the wind,
And the shepherds see no loveliness
In the blossoms left behind.

Birds cheer our lonely groves
With many a beauteous wing—
When happy in their harmless loves
How tenderly they sing.

O'er all the rest was heard
One wild and mournful strain,
—But hush'd is the voice of that hymning bird,
She ne'er must sing again !

Bright through the yew-trees gloom,
I saw a sleeping dove !
On the silence of her silvery plume,
The sunlight lay in love.

The grove seem'd all her own
Round the beauty of that breast—
—But the startled dove afar is flown !
Forsaken is her nest !

In yonder forest wide
A flock of wild-deer lies,
Beauty breathes o'er each tender side,
And shades their peaceful eyes !

The hunter in the night
Hath singled out the doe,
In whose light the mountain-flock lay bright,
Whose hue was like the snow !

A thousand stars shine forth,
With pure and dewy ray—

Till by night the mountains of our north
Seem gladdening in the day.

O empty all the heaven !
Though a thousand lights be there—
For clouds o'er the evening-star are driven,
And shorn her golden hair !

That melancholy music dies—
And all at once the kneeling crowd
Is stirr'd with groans, and sobs, and sighs—
As sudden blasts come rustling loud
Along the silent skies.
—Hush ! hush ! the dirge doth breathe again !
The youngest of the orphan train
Walks up unto the bier,
With rosy cheeks, and smiling eyes
As heaven's unclouded radiance clear ;
And there like Hope to Sorrow's strain
With dewy voice replies.

—What ! though the stream be dead,
Its banks all still and dry !
It murmureth now o'er a lovelier bed
In the air-groves of the sky.

What ! though our prayers from death
The queen-rose might not save !
With brighter bloom and balmier breath
She springeth from the grave.

What ! though our bird of light
Lie mute with plumage dim !
In heaven I see her glancing bright—
I hear her angel hymn.

What ! though the dark tree smile
No more—with our dove's calm sleep !
She folds her wing on a sunny isle
In heaven's untroubled deep.

True that our beauteous doe
Hath left her still retreat—
But purer now in heavenly snow
She lies at Jesus' feet.

O star ! untimely set !
Why should we weep for thee !
Thy bright and dewy coronet
Is rising o'er the sea !

THE
ANGLER'S TENT.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Poem is the narrative of one day, the pleasantest of many pleasant ones, of a little Angling-excursion among the mountains of Westmoreland, Lancashire, and Cumberland. A tent, large panniers filled with its furniture, with provisions, &c. were loaded upon horses, and while the anglers, who separated every morning, pursued each his own sport up the torrents, were carried over the mountains to the appointed place by some lake or stream, where they were to meet again in the evening.

In this manner they visited all the wildest and most secluded scenes of the country. On the first Sunday they passed among the hills, their tent was pitched on the banks of Wast-Water, at the head of that wild and solitary lake, which they had reached by the mountain-path that passes Barn-Moor Tarn from Eskdale. Towards evening the inhabitants of the valley, not exceeding half a dozen families, with some too from the neighbouring glens, drawn by the unusual appearance, came to visit the strangers in their tent. Without, the evening was calm and beautiful; within, were the gaiety and kindness of simple mirth. At a late hour, their guests departed under a most refulgent moon that lighted

them up the surrounding mountains, on which they turned to hail with long-continued shouts and songs the blazing of a huge fire, that was hastily kindled at the door of the tent to bid them a distant farewell.

The images and feelings of these few happy days, and, above all, of that delightful evening, the author wished to preserve in poetry. What he has written, while it serves to himself and his friends as a record of past happiness, may, he hopes, without impropriety be offered to the public, since, if at all faithful to its subject, it will have some interest to those who delight in the wilder scenes of Nature, and who have studied with respect and love the character of their simple inhabitants.

THE
ANGLER'S TENT.

THE hush of bliss was on the sunny hills,
The clouds were sleeping on the silent sky,
We travelled in the midst of melody
Warbled around us from the mountain-rills.
The voice was like the glad voice of a friend
Murmuring a welcome to his happy home ;
We felt its kindness with our spirits blend,
And said, " This day no farther will we roam !"
The coldest heart that ever looked on heaven,
Had surely felt the beauty of that day,
And, as he paused, a gentle blessing given
To the sweet scene that tempted him to stay.
But we, who travelled through that region bright,
Were joyful pilgrims under Nature's care,
From youth had loved the dreams of pure delight,

Descending on us through the lonely air,
When Heaven is clothed with smiles, and Earth as
Heaven is fair!

Seven lovely days had like a happy dream
Died in our spirits silently away,
Since Grassmere, waking to the morning ray,
Met our last lingering look with farewell gleam.
I may not tell what joy our being filled,
Wand'ring like shadows over plain and steep,
What beauteous visions lonely souls can build
When 'mid the mountain solitude they sleep.
I may not tell how the deep power of sound
Can back to life long-faded dreams recall,
When lying 'mid the noise that lives around
Through the hush'd spirit flows a waterfall.
To thee, my WORDSWORTH ! * whose inspired song
Comes forth in pomp from Nature's inner shrine,
To thee by birth-right such high themes belong,
The unseen grandeur of the earth is thine !
One lowlier simple strain of human love be mine.

How leapt our hearts, when from an airy height,
On which we paused for a sweet fountain's sake,

* Mr Wordsworth accompanied the author on this excursion.

With green fields fading in a peaceful lake,
A deep-sunk vale burst sudden on our sight !
We felt as if at home ; a magic sound,
As from a spirit whom we must obey,
Bade us descend into the vale profound,
And in its silence pass the Sabbath-day.
The placid lake that rested far below,
Softly embosoming another sky,
Still as we gazed assumed a lovelier glow,
And seem'd to send us looks of amity.
Our hearts were open to the gracious love
Of Nature, smiling like a happy bride ;
So following the still impulse from above,
Down the green slope we wind with airy glide,
And pitch our snowy tent on that fair water's side.

Ah me ! even now I see before me stand,
Among the verdant holly-boughs half-hid,
The little radiant airy Pyramid,
Like some wild dwelling built in Fairy-land.
As silently as gathering cloud it rose,
And seems a cloud descended on the earth,
Disturbing not the Sabbath-day's repose,
Yet gently stirring at the quiet birth
Of every short-lived breeze : the sunbeams greet
The beauteous stranger in the lonely bay ;

Close to its shading tree two streamlets meet,
With gentle glide, as weary of their play.
And in the liquid lustre of the lake
Its image sleeps, reflected far below ;
Such image as the clouds of summer make,
Clear seen amid the waveless water's glow,
As slumbering infant still, and pure as April snow.

Wild though the dwelling seem, thus rising fair,
A sudden stranger 'mid the sylvan scene,
One spot of radiance on surrounding green,
Human it is—and human souls are there !
Look through that opening in the canvas wall,
Through which by fits the scarce-felt breezes play,
—Upon three happy souls thine eyes will fall,
The summer lambs are not more blest than they !
On the green turf all motionless they lie,
In dreams romantic as the dreams of sleep,
The filmy air slow-glimmering on their eye,
And in their ear the murmur of the deep.
Or haply now by some wild-winding brook,
Deep, silent pool, or waters rushing loud,
In thought they visit many a fairy nook
That rising mists in rainbow colours shroud,
And ply the Angler's sport involved in mountain-
cloud !

Yes ! dear to us that solitary trade,
'Mid vernal peace in peacefulness pursued,
Through rocky glen, wild moor, and hanging wood,
White-flowering meadow, and romantic glade !
The sweetest visions of our boyish years
Come to our spirits with a murmuring tone
Of running waters,—and one stream appears,
Remember'd all, tree, willow, bank, and stone !
How glad were we, when after sunny showers
Its voice came to us issuing from the school !
How fled the vacant, solitary hours,
By dancing rivulet, or silent pool !
And still our souls retain in manhood's prime
The love of joys our childish years that blest ;
So now encircled by these hills sublime,
We Anglers, wandering with a tranquil breast,
Build in this happy vale a fairy bower of rest !

Within that bower are strewn in careless guise,
Idle one day, the angler's simple gear :
Lines that, as fine as floating gossamer,
Dropt softly on the stream the silken flies ;
The limber rod that shook its trembling length,
Almost as airy as the line it threw,
Yet often bending in an arch of strength
When the tired salmon rose at last to view,

Now lightly leans across the rushy bed,
On which at night we dream of sports by day ;
And, empty now, beside it close is laid
The goodly pannier framed of osiers gray ;
And, maple bowl in which we wont to bring
The limpid water from the morning wave,
Or from some mossy and sequester'd spring
To which dark rocks a grateful coolness gave,
Such as might Hermit use in solitary cave !

And ne'er did Hermit, with a purer breast,
Amid the depths of sylvan silence pray,
Than prayed we friends on that mild quiet day,
By God and man beloved, the day of rest !
All passions in our souls were lull'd to sleep,
Ev'n by the power of Nature's holy bliss ;
While Innocence her watch in peace did keep
Over the spirit's thoughtful happiness !
We view'd the green earth with a loving look,
Like us rejoicing in the gracious sky ;
A voice came to us from the running brook
That seem'd to breathe a grateful melody.
Then all things seem'd embued with life and sense,
And as from dreams with kindling smiles to wake,
Happy in beauty and in innocence ;
While, pleas'd our inward quiet to partake,
Lay hush'd, as in a trance, the scarcely-breathing lake.

Yet think not, in this wild and fairy spot,
This mingled happiness of earth and heaven,
Which to our hearts this Sabbath-day was given,
Think not, that far-off friends were quite forgot.
Helm-crag arose before our half-closed eyes
With colours brighter than the brightening dove ;
Beneath that guardian mount a * cottage lies
Encircled by the halo breathed from Love !
And sweet that dwelling † rests upon the brow
(Beneath its sycamore) of Orest-hill,
As if it smiled on Windermere below,
Her green recesses and her islands still !
Thus, gently-blended many a human thought
With those that peace and solitude supplied,
Till in our hearts the moving kindness wrought
With gradual influence, like a flowing tide,
And for the lovely sound of human voice we sigh'd.

And hark ! a laugh, with voices blended, stole
Across the water, echoing from the shore !
And during pauses short, the beating oar
Brings the glad music closer to the soul.
We leave our tent ; and lo ! a lovely sight
Glides like a living creature through the air,

* At that time the residence of Mr Wordsworth's family.

† The author's cottage on the banks of Windermere.

For air the water seems thus passing bright,
A living creature beautiful and fair !
Nearer it glides ; and now the radiant glow
That on its radiant shadow seems to float,
Turns to a virgin band, a glorious shew,
Rowing with happy smiles a little boat.
Towards the tent, their lingering course they steer,
And cheerful now upon the shore they stand,
In maiden bashfulness, yet free from fear,
And by our side, gay-moving hand in hand,
Into our Tent they go, a beauteous sister-band !

Scarce from our hearts had gone the sweet surprise,
Which this glad troop of rural maids awoke ;
Scarce had a more familiar kindness broke
From the mild lustre of their smiling eyes,
Ere the Tent seem'd encircled by the sound
Of many voices ; in an instant stood
Men, women, children, all the circle round,
And with a friendly joy the strangers view'd.
Strange was it to behold this gladsome crowd
Our late so solitary dwelling fill ;
And strange to hear their greetings mingling loud
Where all before was undisturb'd and still.
Yet was the stir delightful to our ear,
And moved to happiness our inmost blood,
The sudden change, the unexpected cheer,

Breaking like sunshine on a pensive mood,
This breath and voice of life in seeming solitude !

Hard task it was, in our small tent to find
Seats for our quickly-gather'd company ;
But in them all was such a mirthful glee,
I ween they soon were seated to their mind !
Some viewing with a hesitating look
The panniers that contained our travelling fare,
On them at last their humble station took,
Pleased at the thought, and with a smiling air.
Some on our low-framed beds then chose their seat,
Each maid the youth that loved her best beside,
While many a gentle look, and whisper sweet,
Brought to the stripling's face a gladsome pride.
The playful children on the velvet green,
Soon as the first-felt bashfulness was fled,
Smiled to each other at the wondrous scene,
And whisper'd words they to each other said,
And raised in sportive fit the shining, golden head !

Then did we learn that this our stranger tent,
Seen by the lake-side gleaming like a sail,
Had quickly spread o'er mountain and o'er vale
A gentle shock of pleased astonishment.

The lonely dwellers by the lofty rills,
Gazed in surprise upon th' unwonted sight,
The wandering shepherds saw it from the hills,
And quick descended from their airy height.
Soon as the voice of simple song and prayer
Ceased in the little chapel of the dell,
The congregation did in peace repair
To the lake-side, to view our wondrous cell.
While leaving, for one noon, both young and old,
Their cluster'd hamlets in this deep recess,
All join the throng, in conscious good-will bold,
Elate and smiling in their Sabbath-dress,
A mingled various groupe of homely happiness !

And thus our tent a joyous scene became,
Where loving hearts from distant vales did meet
As at some rural festival, and greet
Each other with glad voice and kindly name.
Here a pleased daughter to her father smiled,
With fresh affection in her soften'd eyes ;
He in return look'd back upon his child
With gentle start and tone of mild surprise :
And on his little grand-child, at her breast,
An old man's blessing and a kiss bestow'd,
Or to his cheek the lipping baby prest,
Light'ning the mother of her darling load ;

While comely matrons, all sedately ranged
Close to their husbands' or their children's side,
A neighbour's friendly greeting interchanged,
And each her own with frequent glances eyed,
And raised her head in all a mother's harmless pride.

Happy were we among such happy hearts !
And to inspire with kindness and love
Our simple guests, ambitiously we strove,
With novel converse and endearing arts !
We talk'd to them, and much they loved to hear,
Of those sweet vales from which we late had come ;
For though these vales are to each other near,
Seldom do dalesmen leave their own dear home :
Then would we speak of many a wondrous sight
Seen in great cities,—temple, tower, and spire,
And winding streets at night-fall blazing bright
With many a star-like lamp of glimmering fire.
The grey-hair'd men with deep attention heard,
Viewing the speaker with a solemn face,
While round our feet the playful children stirr'd,
And near their parents took their silent place,
Listening with looks where wonder breathed a glow-
ing grace.

And much they gazed with never-tired delight
On varnish'd rod, with joints that shone like gold,

And silken line on glittering reel enroll'd,
To infant anglers a most wondrous sight !
Scarce could their chiding parents then controul
Their little hearts in harmless malice gay,
But still one, bolder than his fellows, stole
To touch the tempting treasures where they lay.
What rapture glistened in their eager eyes,
When, with kind voice, we bade these children take
A precious store of well-dissembled flies,
To use with caution for the strangers' sake !
The unlook'd-for gift we graciously bestow
With sudden joy the leaping heart o'erpowers ;
They grasp the lines, while all their faces glow
Bright as spring-blossoms after sunny showers,
And wear them in their hats like wreaths of valley-
flowers !

Nor could they check their joyance and surprise,
When the clear crystal and the silver bowl
Gleamed with a novel beauty on their soul,
And the wine mantled with its rosy dyes.
For all our pomp we shew'd with mickle glee,
-And choicest viands, fitly to regale,
On such a day of rare festivity,
Our guests thus wondering at their native vale.
And oft we pledged them, nor could they decline
The social cup we did our best to press,

But mingled wishes with the joyful wine,
Warm wishes for our health and happiness.
And all the while, a low, delightful sound
Of voice soft-answering voice, with music fill'd
Our fairy palace's enchanted ground,
Such tones as seem from blooming tree distill'd,
Where unseen bees repair their waxen cells to build.

Lost as we were in that most blessed mood
Which Nature's sons alone can deeply prove,
We lavish'd with free heart our kindest love
On all who breath'd,—one common brotherhood.
Three faithful servants, men of low degree,
Were with us, as we roamed the wilds among,
And well it pleased their simple hearts to see
Their masters mingling with the rural throng.
Oft to our guests they sought to speak aside,
And, in the genial flow of gladness, told
That we were free from haughtiness or pride,
Though scholars all, and rich in lands and gold.
We smiled to hear our praise thus rudely sung,
(Well might such praise our modesty offend)
Yet, we all strove, at once with eye and tongue
To speak, as if invited by a friend,
And with our casual talk instruction's voice to blend.

Rumours of wars had reached this peaceful vale,
And of the Wicked King, whom guilt hath driven
On earth to wage a warfare against Heaven,
These sinless shepherds had heard many a tale.
Encircled as we were with smiles and joy,
In quietness to Quiet's dwelling brought,
To think of him whose bliss is to destroy,
At such a season was an awful thought !
We felt the eternal power of happiness
And virtue's power ; we felt with holy awe
That in this world, in spite of chance distress,
Such is the Almighty Spirit's ruling law.
And joyfully did we these shepherds tell
To hear all rumours with a tranquil mind,
For, in the end, that all would yet be well,
Nor this bad Monarch leave one trace behind,
More than o'er yonder hills the idly-raving wind.

Then gravely smiled, in all the power of age,
A hoary-headed, venerable man,
Like the mild chieftain of a peaceful clan,
'Mid simple spirits looked on as a sage.
Much did he praise the holy faith we held,
Which God, he said, to cheer the soul had given,
For even the very angels that rebelled,
By sin performed the blessed work of Heaven.

The Wicked King, of whom we justly spake,
Was but an instrument in God's wise hand,
And though the kingdoms of the earth might quake,
Peace would revisit every ravaged land.
Even as the earthquake, in some former time,
Scatter'd yon rugged mountain far and wide,
Till years of winter's snow and summer's prime,
To naked cliffs fresh verdure have supplied,
—Now troops of playful lambs are bounding on its
side.

Pleased were the simple groupe to hear the sire
Thus able to converse with men from far,
And much did they of vaguely-rumour'd war,
That long had raged in distant lands, inquire.
Scarce could their hearts, at peace with all mankind,
Believe what bloody deeds on earth are done,
That man of woman born should be so blind
As walk in guilt beneath the blessed sun ;
And one, with thoughtful countenance, exprest
A fear lest on some dark disastrous day,
Across the sea might come that noisome pest,
And make fair England's happy vales his prey.
Short lived that fear !—soon firmer thoughts arise :
Well could these dalesmen wield the patriot's sword,
And stretch the foe beneath the smiling skies ;

In innocence they trust, and in the Lord,
Whom they, that very morn, in gladness had adored !

But soon such thoughts to lighter speech give way ;
We in our turn a willing ear did lend
To tale of sports, that made them blythely spend
The winter-evening and the summer-day.
Smiling they told us of the harmless glee
That bids the echoes of the mountains wake,
When at the stated festival they see
Their new-wash'd flocks come snow-white from the
lake ;

And joyful dance at neighbouring village fair,
Where lads and lasses, in their best attire,
Go to enjoy that playful pastime rare,
And careful statesmen shepherds new to hire !
Or they would tell, how, at some neighbour's cot,
When nights are long, and winter on the earth,
All cares are in the dance and song forgot,
And round the fire quick flies the circling mirth,
When nuptial vows are pledged, or at an infant's
birth !

Well did the roses blooming on their cheek,
And eyes of laughing light, that glisten'd fair

Beneath the artless ringlets of their hair,
Each maiden's health and purity bespeak.
Following the impulse of their simple will,
No thought had they to give or take offence ;
Glad were their bosoms, yet sedate and still,
And fearless in the strength of innocence.
Oft as, in accents mild, we strangers spoke
To these sweet maidens, an unconscious smile
Like sudden sunshine o'er their faces broke,
And with it struggling blushes mix'd the while.
And oft as mirth and glee went laughing round,
Breath'd in this maiden's ear some harmless jest
Would make her, for one moment, on the ground
Her eyes let fall, as wishing from the rest
To hide the sudden throb that beat within her breast.

Oh ! not in vain have purest poets told,
In elegies and hymns that ne'er shall die,
How, in the fields of famous Arcady,
Lived simple shepherds in the age of gold !
They fabled not, in peopling rural shades
With all most beautiful in heart and frame ;
Where without guile swains woo'd their happy maids,
And love was friendship with a gentler name.
Such songs in truth and nature had their birth,
Their source was lofty and their aim was pure,

And still, in many a favour'd spot of earth,
The virtues that awoke their voice endure !
Bear witness thou ! O, wild and beauteous dell,
To whom my gladden'd heart devotes this strain ;
—O ! long may all who in thy bosom dwell
Nature's primeval innocence retain,
Nor e'er may lawless foot thy sanctity profane !

Sweet Maids ! my wandering heart returns to you ;
And well the blush of joy, the courteous air,
Words unrestrained, and open looks declare
That fancy's day-dreams have not been untrue.
It was indeed a beauteous thing, to see
The virgin, while her bashful visage smiled,
As if she were a mother on her knee
Take up, with many a kiss, the asking child.
And well, I ween, she play'd the mother's part ;
For as she bended o'er the infant fair,
A mystic joy seem'd stirring at her heart,
A yearning fondness, and a silent prayer.
Nor did such gentle maiden long refuse
To cheer our spirits with some favourite strain,
Some simple ballad, framed by rustic muse,
Of one who died for love, or, led by gain,
Sail'd in a mighty ship to lands beyond the main.

And must we close this scene of merriment ?
—Lo ! in the lake soft burns the star of eve,
And the night-hawk hath warn'd our guests to leave,
Ere darker shades descend, our happy tent.
The Moon's bright edge is seen above the hill ;
She comes to light them on their homeward way ;
And every heart, I ween, now lies as still
As on yon fleecy cloud her new-born ray.
Kindly by young and old our hands are press'd,
And kindly we the gentle touch return ;
Each face declares that deep in every breast
Peace, virtue, friendship, and affection burn.
At last beneath the silent air we part,
And promise make that shall not be in vain,
A promise asked and given warm from the heart,
That we will visit all, on hill and plain,
If e'er it be our lot to see this land again !

Backward they gazed, as slowly they withdrew,
With step reluctant, from the water-side ;
And oft, with waving hand, at distance tried
Through the dim light to send a last adieu !
One lovely groupe still linger'd on the green,
The first to come, the last to go away ;
While steep'd in stillness of the moonlight scene,
Moor'd to a rock their little pinnace lay.

These laughing damsels climb its humble side,
Like fairy elves that love the starry sea ;
Nor e'er did billows with more graceful glide
'Mid the wild main enjoy their liberty.
Their faces brightening in triumphant hue,
Close to each maid their joyful lovers stand ;
One gives the signal,—all the jovial crew
Let go, with tender press, the yielding hand ;
—Down drop the oars at once,—away they push
from land.

The boat hath left the silent bank, the tone
Of the retiring oar escapes the mind ;
Like mariners some ship hath left behind,
We feel, thus standing speechless and alone.
One moment lives that melancholy trance—
The mountains ring : Oh ! what a joy is there !
As hurries o'er their heights, in circling dance,
Cave-loving Echo, Daughter of the Air.
Is it some spirit of night that wakes the shout,
As o'er the cliffs, with headlong speed, she ranges ?
Is it, on plain and steep, some fairy rout
Answering each other in tumultuous changes ?
There seems amid the hills a playful war ;
Trumpet and clarion join the mystic noise ;
Now growing on the ear, now dying far !

Great Gabel from his summit sends a voice,
And the remotest depths of Ennerdale rejoice !

Oh ! well I know what means this din of mirth !
No spirits are they, who, trooping through the sky,
In chorus swell that mountain-melody ;
—It comes from mortal children of the earth !
These are the voices that so late did cheer
Our tent with laughter ; from the hills they come
With friendly sound unto our listening ear,
A jocund farewell to our glimmering home.
Loth are our guests, though they have linger'd long,
That our sweet tent at last should leave their sight ;
So with one voice they sing a parting song,
Ere they descend behind the clouds of night.
Nor are we mute ; an answering shout we wake,
At each short pause of the long, lengthening sound,
Till all is silent as the silent Lake,
And every noise above, below, around,
Seems in the brooding night-sky's depth of slumber
drown'd !

Soon from that calm our spirits start again
With blyther vigour ; nought around we see
Save lively images of mirth and glee,
And playful fancies hurry through our brain.

Shine not, sweet Moon ! with such a haughty light ;
Ye stars ! behind your veil of clouds retire ;
For we shall kindle on the earth, this night,
To drown your feeble rays, a joyous fire.
Bring the leaves withering, in the holly-shade,
The oaken branches sapless now and hoar,
The fern no longer green, and whins that fade
'Mid the thin sand that strews the rocky shore.
Heap them above that new-awaken'd spark ;
Soon shall a pyramid of flame arise ;
Now the first rustling of the vapour, hark !
The kindling spirit from its prison flies,
And in an instant mounts in glory to the skies !

Far gleams the Lake, as in the light of day,
Or when, from mountain-top, the setting sun,
Ere yet his earth-delighting course is run,
Sheds on the slumbering wave a purple ray.
A bright'ning verdure runs o'er every field,
As if by potent necromancer shed,
And a dark wood is suddenly reveal'd,
A glory resting on its ancient head.
And oh ! what radiant beauty doth invest
Our tent that seems to feel a conscious pride,
Whiter by far than any cygnet's breast,
Or cygnet's shadow floating with the tide.

A warmer flush unto the moonlight cold,
Winning its lovely way, is softly given,
A silvery radiance tinged with vivid gold ;
While thousand mimic stars are gayly driven
Through the bright glistening air, scarce known from
those in Heaven.

Amid the flame our lurid figures stand,
Or, through the shrouding vapour dimly view'd,
To fancy seem, in that strange solitude,
Like the wild brethren of some lawless band.
One, snatching from the heap a blazing bough,
Would, like lone maniac, from the rest retire,
And, as he waved it, mutter deep a vow,
His head encircled with a wreath of fire.
Others, with rushing haste, and eager voice,
Would drag new victims to the insatiate power,
That like a savage idol did rejoice
Whate'er his suppliants offer'd to devour. .
And aye strange murmurs o'er the mountains roll'd,
As if from sprite immured in cavern lone,
While higher rose pale Luna to behold
Our mystic orgies, where no light had shone,
For many and many a year of silence—but her own.

O ! gracious Goddess ! not in vain did shine
Thy spirit o'er the heavens ; with reverent eye

We hail'd thee floating through the happy sky ;
No smiles to us are half so dear as thine !
Silent we stood beside our dying flame,
In pensive sadness, born of wild delight,
And gazing heavenward, many a gentle name
Bestow'd on her who beautifies the night.
Then, with one heart, like men who inly mourn'd,
Slowly we paced towards our fairy cell,
And e'er we enter'd, for one moment turn'd,
And bade the silent majesty farewell !
Our rushy beds invite us to repose ;
And while our spirits breathe a grateful prayer,
In balmy slumbers soon our eyelids close,
While, in our dreams, the Moon, serenely fair,
Still bathes in light divine the visionary air !

Methinks, next night, I see her mount her throne,
Intent with loving smile once more to hail
The deep, deep peace of this her loneliest vale,
—But where hath now the magic dwelling flown ?
Oh ! it hath melted like a dream away,
A dream by far too beautiful for earth ;
Or like a cloud that hath no certain stay,
But ever changing, like a different birth.
The aged holly trees more silently,
Now we are gone, stand on the silent ground ;

I seem to hear the streamlet floating by
With a complaining, melancholy sound.
Hush'd are the echoes in each mountain's breast,
No traces there of former mirth remain ;
They all in friendly grandeur lie at rest
And silent, save where Nature's endless strain,
From cataract and cave, delights her lonely reign.

Yet, though the strangers and their Tent have past
Away, like snow that leaves no mark behind,
Their image lives in many a guiltless mind,
And long within the shepherd's cot shall last.
Oft when, on winter night, the crowded seat
Is closely wheel'd before the blazing fire,
Then will he love with grave voice to repeat
(He, the grey-headed venerable sire)
The conversation he with us did hold
On moral subjects, he had studied long ;
And some will gibe the maid who was so bold
As sing to strangers readily a song.
Then they unto each other will recal
Each little incident of that strange night,
And give their kind opinion of us all :
God bless their faces smiling in the light
Of their own cottage-hearth ! O, fair subduing
sight !

Friends of my heart ! who shared that purest joy,
And oft will read these lines with soften'd soul,
Go where we will, let years of absence roll,
Nought shall our sacred amity destroy.
We walk'd together through the mountain-calm,
In open confidence, and perfect trust ;
And pleasure, falling through our breasts like balm,
Told that the yearnings that we felt were just.
No slighting tone, no chilling look e'er marr'd
The happiness in which our thoughts reposed,
No words save those of gentleness were heard,
The eye spoke kindly when the lip was closed.
But chief, on that blest day that wakes my song,
Our hearts eternal truth in silence swore ;
The holy oath is planted deep and strong
Within our spirits,—in their inmost core,—
And it shall blossom fair till life shall be no more !

Most hallow'd day ! scarce can my heart sustain
Your tender light by memory made more mild ;
Tears could I shed even like unto a child,
And sighs within my spirit hush the strain.
Too many clouds have dimm'd my youthful life,
These wakeful eyes too many vigils kept ;
Mine hath it been to toss in mental strife,
When in the moonlight breathing Nature slept.

But I forget my cares, in bliss forget,
When, peaceful Valley ! I remember thee ;
I seem to breathe the air of joy, and yet
Thy bright'ning hues with moisten'd eyes I see.
So will it be, till life itself doth close,
Roam though I may o'er many a distant clime ;
Happy, or pining in unnoticed woes,
Oft shall my soul recal that blessed time,
And in her depths adore the beauteous and sublime !

Time that my rural reed at last should cease
Its willing numbers ; not in vain hath flow'd
The strain that on my singing heart bestow'd
The holy boon of undisturbed peace.
O gentlest Lady ! Sister of my friend,
This simple strain I consecrate to thee ;
Haply its music with thy soul may blend,
Albeit well used to loftier minstrelsy.
Nor, may thy quiet spirit read the lay
With cold regard, thou wife and mother blest !
For he was with me on that Sabbath-day,
Whose heart lies buried in thy inmost breast.
Then go my innocent and blameless tale,
In gladness go, and free from every fear,
To yon sweet dwelling above Grass nere vale,
And be to them I long have held so dear,
One of their fire-side songs, still fresh from year to year !

APOLOGY

FOR THE LITTLE NAVAL TEMPLE, ON STORRS'
POINT, WINANDERMERE.

NAY ! Stranger ! smile not at this little dome,
Albeit quaint, and with no nice regard
To highest rules of grace and symmetry,
Plaything of art, it venture thus to stand
'Mid the great forms of Nature. Doth it seem
A vain intruder in the quiet heart
Of this majestic Lake, that like an arm
Of Ocean, or some Indian river vast,
In beauty floats amid its guardian hills ?
Haply it may : yet in this humble tower,
The mimicry of loftier edifice,
There lives a silent spirit, that confers
A lasting charter on its sportive wreath
Of battlements, amid the mountain-calm

To stand as proudly, as yon giant rock
That with his shadow dims the dazzling lake !

Then blame it not : for know 'twas planted here,
In mingled mood of seriousness and mirth,
By one * who meant to Nature's sanctity
No cold unmeaning outrage. He was one
Who often in adventurous youth had sail'd
O'er the great waters, and he dearly loved
Their music wild ; nor less the gallant souls
Whose home is on the Ocean :—so he framed
This jutting mole, that like a natural cape
Meets the soft-breaking waves, and on its point,
Bethinking him of some sea-structure huge,
Watch-tower or light-house, rear'd this mimic dome,
Seen up and down the lake, a monument
Sacred to images of former days.

See ! in the playfulness of English zeal
Its low walls are emblazon'd ! there thou read'st
Howe, Duncan, Vincent, and that mightier name
Whom death has made immortal.—Not misplaced
On temple rising from an inland sea
Such venerable names, though ne'er was heard

* The late Sir John Legard, Bart.

The sound of cannon o'er these tranquil shores,
Save when it peal'd to waken in her cave
The mountain echo : yet this chronicle,
Speaking of war amid the depths of peace,
Wastes not its meaning on the heedless air.
It hath its worshippers : it sends a voice,
A voice creating elevated thoughts,
Into the hearts of our bold peasantry
Following the plough along these fertile vales,
Or up among the misty solitude
Beside the wild sheep-fold. The fishermen,
Who on the clear wave ply their silent trade,
Oft passing lean upon their dripping oars,
And bless the heroes : Idling in the joy
Of summer sunshine, as in light canoe
The stranger glides among these lovely isles,
This little temple to his startled soul
Oft sends a gorgeous vision, gallant crews
In fierce joy cheering as they onwards bear
To break the line of battle, meteor-like
Long ensigns brightening on the towery mast,
And sails in awful silence o'er the main
Lowering like thunder-clouds !—

Then, stranger ! give
A blessing on this temple, and admire

The gaudy pendant round the painted staff
Wreathed in still splendour, or in wanton folds,
Even like a serpent bright and beautiful,
Streaming its burnished glory on the air.
And whether silence sleep upon the stones
Of this small edifice, or from within
Steal the glad voice of laughter and of song,
Pass on with alter'd thoughts, and gently own
That Windermere, with all her radiant isles
Serenely floating on her azure breast,
Like stars in heaven, with kindest smiles may robe
This monument to heroes dedicate,
Nor Nature feel her holy reign profaned
By work of art, though framed in humblest guise,
When a high spirit prompts the builder's soul.

THE FAIRIES,

A DREAM-LIKE REMEMBRANCE OF A DREAM.



IT chanced three merry Fairies met
 On the bridge of a mountain rivulet,
 Whose hanging arch through the misty spray,
 Like a little Lunar Rainbow lay,
 With turf and flowers a pathway meet,
 For the twinkling of unearthly feet,
 For bright were the flowers as their golden tresses,
 And green the turf as their Elfin-dresses.
 Aye the water o'er the Linn
 Was mocking, with a gleesome din,
 The small shrill laughter, as it broke
 In peals from these night-wandering Folk ;
 While the stream danced on with a tinkling tune,
 All happy to meet by a blink o' the moon.

Now laughing louder than before,
They strove to deaden that ceaseless roar ;
And, when vanquished was the waterfall,
Loudly they shouted, one and all,
Like the chorus of a Madrigal,
Till the glen awoke from its midnight trance,
And o'er the hills in flight-like dance,
Was all the troop of echoes driven,
This moment on earth, and that in heaven.

From the silent heart of a hollow Yew,
The Owl sailed forth with a loud halloo ;
And his large yellow eyes looked bright
With wonder, in the wan moonlight,
As hovering white, and still as snow,
He caught a glance of the things below,
All burning on the bridge like fire
In the sea-green glow of their wild attire.
“ Halloo ! Halloo ! tu-whit ! tu-whoo ! ”
Cried the gleesome Elves, and away they flew,
With mimic shriek, sob, cry, and howl,
In headlong chace of the frightened Owl.
With many a buffet they drove him onward,
Now hoisted him up, now pressed him downward ;
They pulled at his horns, and with many a tweak,
Around and around they screwed his beak ;

On his back they beat with a birch-spray flail,
And they tore the long feathers from his tail ;
Then, like warriors mounted in their pride,
Behind his wings behold them ride !
And shouting, charge unto the war,
Each waving his soft plume-scymitar ;
A war of laughter, not of tears,
The wild-wood's harmless Cuirassiers.

Through the depth of Ivy on the wall
(The sole remains of old Greystock Hall)
The Screamer is driven, half scared to death ;
And the gamesome Fairies, all out of breath,
Their tiny robes in the air arranging,
And kisses in their flight exchanging ;
Now slowly with the soft wind stealing
Right onwards, round about now wheeling,
Like leaves blown off in gusty weather,
To the rainbow-bridge all flock together ;
And lo ! on the green moss all alight,
Like a cluster of Goldfinches mingling bright.

What feats the Fairy Creatures played !
Now seeming of the height afraid,
And, folding the moss in fast embraces,
They peeped o'er the bridge with their lovely faces.

Now hanging like the fearless flowers
By their tiny arms in the Cataract-showers,
Swung back and forward with delight,
Like Pearls in the spray-shower burning bright !
Then they dropt at once into the Pool—
A moment gone ! then beautiful
Ascending on slow-hovering wing,
As if with darkness dallying,
They rose again, through the smiling air,
To their couch of moss and flow'rets fair,
And rooted lay in silence there.

Down into the gulf profound
Slid the stream without a sound !
A charm had hushed the thundering shocks,
And stillness steeped the blackened rocks.
'Twas fit, where these fair things were lying,
No sound, save of some Zephyr sighing,
Should stir the gentle Solitude !
The mountain's night-voice was subdued
To far-off music faint and dim,
From Nature's heart a holy hymn !
Nor was that Universal Strain
Through Fairy-bosoms breathed in vain ;
Entranced in joy the Creatures lay,
Listening the music far away,

Till One the deep'ning silence broke,
And thus in song-like murmurs spoke.

MOUNTAIN-FAIRY.

“ Soon as the lingering Sun, was gone,
I sailed away from my sparry throne,
Mine own cool, silent, glimmering dwelling,
Below the roots of the huge Hylvellyn.
As onwards like a thought I flew,
From my wings fast fell the pearly dew,
Sweet tiny orbs of lucid ray
Rising and setting on my way,
As if I had been some Planet fair,
That ruled its own bright atmosphere.
“ O beauteous sight !” the Shepherd cried,
To the Shepherd slumbering at his side,—
“ Look where the Mountain-Fairy flies !”
But e'er he had opened his heavy eyes,
I had flown o'er Grassmere's moonlight flood,
And the rustling swing of old Rydal-Wood,
And sunk down 'mid the heather-bells
On the shady side of sweet Furness-Fells.
'Twas but one soft wave o' my wing !
A start, and an end to my journeying.
One moment's rest in a spot so dear,—
For the Moonlight was sleeping on Windermere,

And I saw in that long pure streak of light
The joy and the sadness of the night,
And mine eyes, in sooth, began to fill,
So beautiful that Lake—so still—
So motionless its gentle breast—
Save where just rocking in their rest,
A crowd of water-lilies lay
Like stars amid the milky way.

But what had I with the Lake to do ?
So off to the misty hills I flew,
And in dark ravines, and creviced rocks,
With my finger I counted my thousand flocks,
And each little Lamb by name I blest,
As snow-white they lay in their innocent rest.
When I saw some weak cold tottering Lamb
Recline 'gainst the side of its pitiful Dam,
Who seemed to have some wildering fear
Of Death, as of a Foe that was near,
I shone like a sunbeam soft and warm
Till the fleece lay smooth on its strengthened form,
And the happy Creatures lay down together
Like waves on the sea in gentle weather,
And in contentment calm and deep
Sank faintly-bleating into sleep.

In the soft moonlight glow I knew
Where the herbs that hold the poison grew ;
And at the touch of my feathery foot
They withered at once both stalk and root,
But I shook not the gracious tears of night
From the plants most dear to the Shepherd's sight,
And with mellow lustre bade them spring
In the yellow round of the Fairy's ring,
Till, methought, the hillside smiled afar
With the face of many a verdant Star.
I marked the Fox at the mouth of his den,
And raised the shadows of Hunter-men,
And I bade ærial beagles rave,
And the horn twang through the Felon's cave,
Then buried him with Famine in his grave.

The Raven sat upon Langdale-Peak
With crusted blood on his ebon-beak,
And I dashed him headlong from the steep,
While the murderer croaked in his sullen sleep.
Away I sailed by the Eagle's nest
And the Eaglets couched warm beneath her breast,
But the Shepherd shall miss her cry at morn,
For her eyes are dim and her plumage torn,
And I left in their Eyrie the Imps accurst
To die in their hunger, and cold, and thirst.

All, all is well with my lovely Flocks !
And so I dropt suddenly down the rocks,
From Loughrig-top, like a falling Star,
Seen doubtless through the mists afar
By a hundred Shepherds on the Hill
Wandering among the Moonlight still,
And with folded wings and feet earth-bound
I felt myself standing o'er the sound
Of this Waterfall, and with joy espied
A Sister-Elf at either side !
My Tale is told—nor strange nor new—
Now, sweet Lady Bright-Eyes ! what say you ?”

As some wild Night-Flower through the dew
Looks to the Moon with freshened hue,
When a wandering breath of air
Hath lifted up its yellow hair,
And its own little glāde grows bright
At the soft revealment of its light,
Upsprung, so sudden and so sweet,
The MOUNTAIN-FAIRY to her feet ;
And, looking round her with a smile,
Silent the Creature paused awhile,
Uncertain what glad thoughts should burst
In music from her spirit first,

*Till, like a breath breathed clear from Heaven,
To her at once a voice was given,
And through the tune the words arose
As through the fragrant dew the leaflets of the Rose.*

COTTAGE-FAIRY.

“ Sisters ! I have seen this night
A hundred Cottage-Fires burn bright,
And a thousand happy faces shining
In the bursting blaze, and the gleam declining.
I care not I for the stars above,
The lights on earth are the lights I love :
Let Venus bless the Evening-air,
Uprise at morn Prince Lucifer,
But those little tiny stars be mine
That through the softened copse-wood shine,
With beauty crown the pastoral hill,
And glimmer o’er the sylvan rill,
Where stands the Peasant’s ivied nest,
And the huge mill-wheel is at rest.
From out the honeysuckle’s bloom
I peeped into that laughing room,
Then, like a hail-drop, on the pane
Pattering, I stilled the din again,
While every startled eye looked up ;
And, half-raised to her lips the cup,

The rosy Maiden's look met mine !
But I veiled mine eyes with the silken twine
Of the small wild roses clustering thickly ;
Then to her seat returning quickly,
She 'gan to talk with bashful glee
Of Fairies 'neath the greenwood Tree
Dancing by moonlight, and she blest
Gently our silent Land of rest.
The Infants playing on the floor,
At these wild words their sports gave o'er,
And asked where lived the Cottage-Fairy ;
The maid replied, " She loves to tarry
Oftimes beside our very hearth,
And joins in little Children's mirth
When they are gladly innocent ;
And sometimes beneath the leafy Tent,
That murmurs round our Cottage-door,
Our overshadowing Sycamore,
We see her dancing in a ring,
And hear the blessed Creature sing—
A Creature full of gentleness,
Rejoicing in our happiness."
Then plucked I a wreath with many a gem
Burning—a flowery Diadem ;
And through the wicket with a glide
I slipped, and sat me down beside

The youngest of those Infants fair,
And wreathed the blossoms round her hair.
“ Who placed these flowers on William’s head ? ”
His little wondering Sister said,
“ A wreath not half so bright and gay
Crowned me, upon the morn of May,
Queen of that sunny Holiday.”
The tiny Monarch laughed aloud
With pride among the loving crowd,
And, with my shrillest voice, I lent
A chorus to their merriment ;
Then with such murmur as a Bee
Makes, from a flower-cup suddenly
Borne off into the silent sky,
I skimmed away, and with delight
Sailed down the calm stream of the night,
Till gently, as a flake of Snow,
Once more I dropt on earth below,
And girdled as, with a rainbow zone,
The Cot beloved I call mine own.

“ Sweet Cot ! that on the mountain-side
Looks to the stars of Heaven with pride,
And then flings far its smiling cheer
O’er the radiant Isles of Windermere,—

Blest ! ever blest ! thy sheltered roof !
Pain, grief, and trouble, stand aloof
From the shadow of thy green Palm-Tree !
Let nought from Heaven e'er visit Thee,
But dews, and rays, and sounds of mirth ;
And ever may this happy Earth
Look happiest round thy small domain !
Thee were I ne'er to see again,
Methinks that agony and strife
Would fall even on a Fairy's life,
And nought should ever bless mine eyes
Save the dream of that vanished Paradise.
—The hush'd bee-hives were still as death—
And the sleeping Doves held fast their breath,
Nestling together on the thatch ;
With my wing-tip I raised the latch,
And there that lovely Lady shone,
In silence sitting all alone,
Beside the cradle of her Child !
And ever as she gazed, she smiled
On his calm forehead white as snow ;
I rock'd the cradle to and fro,
As on the broom a Linnet's nest
Swings to the mild wind from the west ;
And oft his little hands and breast,
With warm and dewy lips I kist.

“ Sweet Fairy !” the glad Mother said,
And down she knelt as if she prayed—
While glad was I to hear our name
Bestowed on such a beauteous frame,
And with my wings I hid mine eyes,
Till I saw the weeping kneeler rise
From her prayer in holy extacies !”

The COTTAGE-FAIRY ceased ; and Night,
That seem'd to feel a calm delight
In the breath of that sweet-warbling tongue,
Was sad at closing of the song,
And all her starry eyne look'd dull,
Of late so brightly beautiful ;
Till on the Fox-glove's topmost cup
The FAIRY OF THE LAKE leapt up,
And with that gorgeous column swinging,
By fits a low wild prelude singing,
And gracefully on tip-toe standing,
With outstretched arm, as if commanding,
The beauty of the Night again
Revived beneath her heavenly strain.—
Low, sad, and wild, were the tones I heard,
Like the opening song of the hidden Bird,
E'er music steeps th' Italian vales
From the heart of a thousand Nightingales ;

But words were none ; the balmy air
Grew vocal round that Elfin fair,
And, like her fragrant breath, the song
Dropp'd dewily from that sweet tongue,
But 'twas a language of her own,
To grosser human sense unknown ;
And while in blissful reverie
My soul lived on that melody,
In a moment all as death was still :
Then, like an echo in a Hill
Far off one melancholy strain !
Too heavenly pure to rise again,—
And all alone the dreamer stood
Beside the disenchanted flood,
That rolled the rocky banks along
With its own dull, slow, mortal song.
—What wafted off the Fairies ? hush !
The storm comes down the glen—crush—crush—
And as the blackening rain-cloud broke,
The Pine Tree groans to the groaning Oak !
Thunder is in the waving wood—
And from Rydal-mere's white-flashing flood
There comes through the mist an angry roar,
Loud as from the great sea-shore.
Well, I ween, the Fairies knew
The clouds that the sudden tempest brew,

And had heard far-off the raging rills,
As they leapt down from a hundred hills,—
And the ghostlike moan that wails and raves
From the toppling crags and the sable caves,—
Ere the night-storm in his wrath doth come,
And bids each meaner sound be dumb—
So they sailed away to the land of rest,
Each to the spot that it loved the best,
And left our noisy world !

THE
HERMITAGE.

STRANGER ! this lonely glen in ancient times
Was named the glen of blood ; nor Christian feet
By night or day, from these o'er-arching cliffs
That haply now have to thy joyful shouts
Return'd a mellow music, ever brought
One trembling sound to break the depth of silence.
The village maiden, in this little stream,
Though then, as now, most clearly beautiful,
Ne'er steeped her simple garments, while she sang
Some native air of sadness or of mirth.
In these cold, shady pools, the fearless trout
Ne'er saw the shadow, but of sailing cloud,
Or kite that wheeling eyed the far-off lamb ;
And on yon hazel bowers the ripen'd fruit
Hung clustering, moved but by the frequent swing
Of playful squirrel,—for no school-boy here

With crook and angle light on holiday
Came nutting, or to snare the sportive fry.
Even bolder spirits shunn'd the glen of blood !
These rocks, the abode of echo, never mock'd
In sportive din the huntsman's bugle horn ;
And as the shepherd from the mountain-fold
Homewards return'd beneath the silent Moon,
A low unconscious prayer would agitate
His breathless heart, for here in unblest grave
Lay one for whom ne'er toll'd the passing bell !

And thus was Nature by the impious guilt
Of one who scorn'd her gracious solitude,
Defrauded of her worshippers : though pure
This glen, as consecrated house of God,
Fit haunt of heaven-aspiring piety,
Or in whose dripping cells the poet's ear
Might list unearthly music, this sweet glen
With all its tender tints and pensive sounds,
Its balmy fragrance and romantic forms,
Lay lonely and unvisited, yea worse,
Peopled with fancied demons, and the brood
At enmity with man.

So was it once :
But now far other creed hath sanctified

This dim seclusion, and all human hearts
Unto its spirit deeply reconciled.
'Tis said, and I in truth believe the tale,
That many years ago an aged man,
Of a divine aspect and stately form,
Came to this glen, and took up his abode
In one of those wild caves so numerous
Among the hanging cliffs, though hid from view
By trailing ivy, or thick holly-bush,
Through the whole year so deeply, brightly green.
With evil eye the simple villagers
First look'd on him, and scarcely dared to tell
Each other, what dim fears were in their souls.
But there is something in the voice and eye
Of beautiful old age, with angel power
That charms away suspicion, and compels
The unwilling soul to reverence and love.
So was it with this mystical old man !
When first he came into the glen, the spring
Had just begun to tinge the sullen rocks
With transient smiles, and ere the leafy bowers
Of summer rustled, many a visitant
Had sat within his hospitable cave,
From his maple bowl the unpolluted spring
Drunk fearless, and with him partook the bread

That his pale lips most reverently had bless'd
With words becoming such a holy man !

Oft was he seen surrounded by a groupe
Of happy children, unto whom he spake
With more than a paternal tenderness ;
And they who once had gazed with trembling fear
On the wild dweller in th' unholy glen,
At last with airy trip and gladsome song
Would seek him there, and listen on his knee
To mournful ditties, and most touching tales !

One only book was in this hermit's cell,
The Book of Life ; and when from it he read
With solemn voice devoutly musical,
His thoughtful eye still brightening as the words,
The words of Jesus, in that peaceful cave
Sounded more holily,—and his grey hair,
Betokening that e'er long in Jesus' breast
Would be his blessed sleep,—on his calm brows
Spread quietly, like thin and snowy clouds
On the hush'd evening sky :—While thus he sate,
Ev'n like the Apostle whom our Saviour loved,
In his old age, in Patmos' lonely isle
Musing on him that he had served in youth,—
Oh ! then, I ween, the awe-struck villagers

Could scarce sustain his tones so deeply charged
With hope, and faith, and gratitude, and joy.
But when they gazed !—in the mild lineaments
Of his majestic visage, they beheld
How beautiful is holiness, and deem'd
That sure he was some spirit sent by God
To teach the way to Heaven!

And yet his voice
Was oft times sadder, than as they conceived
An Angel's voice would be, and though to sooth
The sorrows of all others ever seem'd
His only end in life, perhaps he had
Griefs of his own of which he nothing spake ;
Else were his locks more grey, more pale his cheek,
Than one had thought who only saw his form
So stately and so tall.—

Once did they speak
To him of that most miserable man
Who here himself had slain,—and then his eye
Was glazed with stern compassion, and a tear,—
It was the first they e'er had seen him shed,
Though mercy was the attribute he loved
Dearest in God's own Son,—be limm'd its light
For a short moment ; yea, that hermit old

Wept,—and his sadden'd face angelical
Veil'd with his wither'd hands,—then on their knees
He bade his children (so he loved to call
The villagers) kneel down ; and unto God
Pray for his brother's soul.—

Amid the dust

The hermit long hath slept,—and every one
That listen'd to the saint's delightful voice.
In yonder church-yard, near the eastern porch,
Close to the altar-wall, a little mound
As if by Nature shaped, and strewn by her
With every tender flower that sorrow loves,
Tradition calls his grave. On Sabbath-day,
The hind oft hears the legendary tale
Rehearsed by village moralist austere
With many a pious phrase ; and not a child,
Whose trembling feet have scarcely learnt to walk,
But will conduct thee to the hallow'd spot
And lisp the hermit's name.

Nor did the cave

That he long time from Nature tenanted
Remain unhonour'd.—Duly every spring,
Upon the day he died, thither repair'd
Many a pure spirit, to his memory

Chaunting a choral hymn, composed by one
Who on his death-bed sat and closed his eyes.
“ I am the resurrection and the life,”
Some old man then would, with a solemn voice,
Read from that Bible that so oft had blest
The Hermit's solitude with heavenly cheer.
This Book, sole relic of the sinless man,
Was from the dust kept sacred, and even now
Lies in yon box of undecaying yew,
And may it never fade !—

Stranger unknown !

Thou breath'st, at present, in the very cave
Where on the Hermit death most gently fell
Like a long wish'd-for slumber. The great Lord,
Whose castle stands amid the music wild
Breathed from the bosom of an hundred glens,
In youth by nature taught to venerate
Things truly venerable, hither came
One year to view the fair solemnity :
And that the forest-weeds might not obstruct
The entrance of the cave, or worm defile
The soft green beauty of its mossy walls,
This massive door was from a fallen oak
Shaped rudely, but all other ornament,
That porch of living rock with woodbines wreathed,

And outer roof with many a pensile shrub
Most delicate, he with wise feeling left
To Nature, and her patient servant, Time !

Stranger ! I know thee'not : yet since thy feet
Have wandered here, I deem that thou art one
Whose heart doth love in silent communings
To walk with Nature, and from scenes like these
Of solemn sadness, to sublime thy soul
To high endurance of all earthly pains
Of mind or body ; so that thou connect
With Nature's lovely and more lofty forms,
Congenial thoughts of grandeur or of grace
In moral being. All creation takes
The spirit of its character from him
Who looks thereon ; and to a blameless heart,
Earth, air, and ocean, howsoe'er beheld,
Are pregnant with delight, while even the clouds,
Embath'd in dying sunshine, to the base
Possess no glory, and to the wicked lower
As with avenging thunder.

, This sweet glen,

How sweet it is thou feel'st, with sylvan rocks
Excluding all but one blue glimpse of sky
Above, and from the world that lies around

All but the faint remembrance, tempted once
To most unnatural murder, once sublimed
To the high temper of the seraphim :
And thus, though its mild character remain'd
Immutable,—with pious dread was shunn'd
As an unholy spot, or visited
With reverence, as a consecrated shrine.

Farewell ! and grave this moral on thy heart,
“ That Nature smiles for ever on the good,—
“ But that all beauty dies with innocence !”

LINES

WRITTEN ON READING THE MEMOIRS OF

MISS ELISABETH SMITH.



PEACE to the dead ! the voice of Nature cries,
Even o'er the grave where guilt or frailty lies ;
Compassion drives each sterner thought away,
And all seem good when mouldering in the clay.
For who amid the dim religious gloom,
The solemn Sabbath brooding o'er the tomb,
The holy stillness that suspends our breath
When the soul rests within the shade of death,
What heart could then withhold the pensive sigh
Reflection pays to poor mortality,
Nor sunk in pity near allied to love,
E'en bless the being we could ne'er approve !
The headstrong will with innocence at strife,
The restless passions that deform'd his life,

Desires that spurn'd at reason's weak controul,
 And dimm'd the native lustre of the soul,
 The look repulsive that like ice repress'd
 The friendly warmth that play'd within the breast,
 The slighting word, through heedlessness severe,
 Wounding the spirit that it ought to cheer,
 Lie buried in the grave ! or if they live,
 Remembrance only wakes them to forgive ;
 While vice and error steal a soft relief
 From the still twilight of a mellowing grief.
 And oh ! how lovely do the tints return
 Of every virtue sleeping in the urn !
 Each grace that fledet unobserved away,
 Starts into life when those it deck'd decay ;
 Regret fresh beauty on the corse bestows,
 And self-reproach is mingled with our woes.

But nobler sorrows lift the musing mind,
 When soaring spirits leave their frames behind,
 Who walked the world in Nature's generous pride,
 And, like a sun-beam, lighten'd as they died !
 Hope, resignation, the sad soul beguile,
 And Grief's tear drops 'mid Faith's celestial smile :
 Then burns our being with a holy mirth
 That owns no kindred with this mortal earth ;

For hymning angels in blest vision wave
Their wings' bright glory o'er the seraph's grave !

Oh thou ! whose soul unmoved by earthly strife,
Led by the pole-star of eternal life,
Own'd no emotion stain'd by touch of clay,
No thought that angels might not pleased survey ;
Thou ! whose calm course through Virtue's fields was
run

From youth's fair morning to thy setting sun,
Nor vice e'er dared one little cloud to roll
O'er the bright beauty of thy spotless soul ;
Thou ! who secure in good works strong to save,
Resign'd and happy, eyed'st the opening grave,
And in the blooming summer of thy years
Scarce felt'st regret to leave this vale of tears ;
Oh ! from thy throne amid the starry skies,
List to my words thus interwove with sighs,
And if the high resolves, the cherish'd pain
That prompt the weak but reverential strain,
If love of virtue ardent and sincere
Can win to mortal verse a cherub's ear,
Bend from thy radiant throne thy form divine,
And make the adoring spirit pure as thine !
When my heart muses o'er the long review
Of all thy bosom felt, thy reason knew,

O'er boundless learning free from boastful pride,
And patience humble though severely tried,
Judgment unclouded, passions thrice refined,
A heaven-aspiring loftiness of mind,
And, rare perfection ! calm and sober sense
Combined with fancy's wild magnificence ;
Struck with the pomp of Nature's wondrous plan,
I hail with joy the dignity of man,
And soaring high above life's roaring sea,
Spring to the dwelling of my God and Thee.

Short here thy stay ! for souls of holiest birth
Dwell but a moment with the sons of earth ;
To this dim sphere by God's indulgence given,
Their friends are angels, and their home is heaven.
The fairest rose in shortest time decays ;
The sun, when brightest, soon withdraws his rays ;
The dew that gleams like diamonds on the thorn,
Melts instantaneous at the breath of morn ;
Too soon a rolling shade of darkness shrouds
The star that smiles amid the evening clouds ;
And sounds that come so sweetly on the ear,
That the soul wishes every sense could hear,
Are as the Light's unwearied pinions fleet,
As scarce as beauteous, and as short as sweet.

Yet, though the unpolluted soul requires
Airs born in Heaven to fan her sacred fires,
And mounts to God exulting to be free
From fleshly chain that binds mortality,
The world is hallow'd by her blest sojourn,
And glory dwells for ever round her urn !
Her skirts of beauty sanctify the air
That felt her breathings, and that heard her prayer ;
Vice dies where'er the radiant vision trod,
And there e'en Atheists must believe in God !
Such the proud triumphs that the good achieve !
Such the blest gift that sinless spirits leave !
The parted soul in God-given strength sublime,
Streams undimm'd splendour o'er unmeasured time ;
Still on the earth the sainted hues survive,
Dead in the tomb, but in the heart alive.
In vain the tide of ages strives to roll
A bar to check the intercourse of soul ;
The hovering spirits of the good and great
With fond remembrance own their former state,
And musing virtue often can behold
In vision high their plumes of wavy gold,
And drink with tranced ear the silver sound
Of seraphs hymning on their nightly round.
By death untaught, our range of thought is small,
Bound by the attraction of this earthly ball.

Our sorrows and our joys, our hopes and fears,
Ignobly pent within a few short years ;
But when our hearts have read Fate's mystic book,
On Heaven's gemm'd sphere we lift a joyful look,
Hope turns to Faith, Faith glorifies the gloom,
And life springs forth exulting from the tomb !

Oh, blest ELIZA ! though to me unknown,
Thine eye's mild lustre and thy melting tone ;
Though on this earth apart our lives were led,
Nor my love found thee till thy soul was fled ;
Yet, can affection kiss thy silent clay,
And rend the glimmering veil of death away :
Fancy beholds with fixed, delighted eye,
Thy white-robed spirit gently gliding by ;
Deep sinks thy smile into my quiet breast,
As moonlight steeps the ocean-wave in rest !
While ~~thus~~, bright shade ! thine eyes of mercy dwell
On that fair land thou loved'st of old so well,
What holy raptures through thy being flow,
To see thy memory blessing all below,
Virtue re-kindle at thy grave her fires,
And vice repentant shun his low desires !
This the true Christian's heaven ! on earth to see
The sovereign power of immortality

At war with sin, and in triumphant pride
Spreading the empire of the crucified.

Oft 'mid the calm of mountain solitude,
Where Nature's loveliness thy spirit woo'd ;
Where lonely cataracts with sullen roar
To thy hush'd heart a fearful rapture bore,
And caverns moaning with the voice of night,
Steep'd through the ear thy mind in strange delight
I feel thy influence on my heart descend
Like words of comfort whispered by a friend,
And every cloud in lovelier figures roll,
Shaped by the power of thy presiding soul !
And when, slow-sinking in a blaze of light,
The sun in glory bathes each radiant height,
Amid the glow thy form seraphic seems
To float refulgent with unborrow'd beams ;
For thou, like him, hadst still thy course pursued,
From thy own blessedness dispensing good ;
Brightly that soul in life's fair morn arose,
And burn'd like him, more glorious at its close.

But now, I feel my pensive spirit turn,
Where parents, brothers, sisters, o'er thee mourn.
For though to all unconscious time supplies
A strength of soul that stifles useless sighs ;

And in our loneliest hours of grief is given
To our dim gaze a nearer glimpse of heaven,
Yet, human frailty pines in deep distress,
Even when a friend has soar'd to happiness,
And sorrow, selfish from excess of love,
Would glad recal the seraph from above !
And, chief, to thee ! on whose delighted breast,
While, yet a babe, she play'd herself to rest,
Who rock'd her cradle with requited care,
And bless'd her sleeping with a silent prayer ;
'To thee, who first beheld, with watchful eye,
From her flush'd cheek health's natural radiance fly,
And, though by fate denied the power to save,
Smooth'd with kind care her passage to the grave,
When slow consumption led with fatal bloom
A rosy spectre smiling to the tomb ;
The strain of comfort first to thee would flow,
But thou hast comforts man could ne'er bestow ;
And e'en misfortune's long and gloomy roll
Wakes dreams of glory in thy stately soul.
For reason whispers, and religion proves,
That God by sorrow chasteneth whom he loves ;
And suffering virtue smiles at misery's gloom,
Cheer'd by the light that burns beyond the tomb.

All Nature speaks of thy departed child,
The flowery meadow, and the mountain wild ;

Of her the lark 'mid sun-shine oft will sing,
And torrents flow with dirge-like murmuring !
The lake, that smiles to heaven a watery gleam,
Shows in the vivid beauty of a dream
Her, whose fine touch in mellowing hues array'd
The misty summit and the woodland glade,
The sparkling depth that slept in waveless rest,
And verdant isles reflected on its breast.
As down the vale thy lonely footsteps stray,
While eve stills dimly on retiring day,
And the pale light that nameless calm supplies,
That holds communion with the promised skies,
When Nature's beauty overpowers distress,
And stars soft-burning kindle holiness,
Thy lips in passive resignation move,
And peace broods o'er thee on the wings of love.
The languid mien, the cheek of hectic dye,
The mournful beauty of the radiant eye,
The placid smile, the light and easy breath
Of nature blooming on the brink of death,
When the fair phantom breathed in twilight balm
A dying vigour and deceitful calm,
The tremulous voice that ever loved to tell
Thy fearful heart, that all would soon be well,
Steal on thy memory, and though tears will fall
O'er scenes gone by that thou would'st fain recal,

Yet oft has faith with deeper bliss beguiled
A parent weeping her departed child,
Than love maternal, when her baby lay
Hush'd at her breast, or smiling in its play,
And, as some glimpse of infant fancy came,
Murmuring in scarce-heard lisp some broken name.
Thou feel'st no more grief's palpitating start,
Nor the drear night hangs heavy on thy heart.
Though sky and star may yet awhile divide
Thy mortal being from thy bosom's pride,
Your spirits mingle—while to thine is given
A loftier nature from the touch of heaven.

EXTRACT

FROM AN UNFINISHED POEM, ENTITLED

“ THE HEARTH.”

MY soul, behold the beauty of his home !
 The very heavens look down with gracious smiles
 Upon its holy rest. How bright a green
 Sleeps round the dwelling of two loving hearts !
 The air lies hush'd above the peaceful roof,
 As if it felt the sanctity within.
 On glides the river with a tranquil flow,
 Delighting in his music, as he bathes
 The happy bounds where happiness doth stray.
 —I see them sitting by each other's side,
 In the heart's silent secrecy ! I hear
 The breath of meditation from 'their souls.
 They speak : a soft, subduing tenderness,
 Born of devotion, innocence and bliss,

Steals from their bosoms in a silver voice
That makes a pious hymning melody.
They look : a gleam of light as sadly sweet
As if they listen'd to some mournful tale,
Swims in their eyes that almost melt to tears.
They smile : oh ! never did such languor steal
From lustre of two early-risen stars
When all the silent heavens appear their own.
And lo ! an infant shews his gladsome face !
His beautiful and shining golden head
Lies on his mother's bosom, like a rose
Fallen on a liliated bank. A dewy light
Meets the soft smiling of his upward eye,
As in the playful restlessness of joy
He clings around her neck, and fondly strives
To reach the kisses mantling from her soul.
—And now, the baby in his cradle sleeps,
Hush'd by his mother's prayer ! How soft her tread
Falls, like a snow-flake, on the noiseless floor !
She almost fears to breathe too fond a sigh
Towards the father of her darling child.
—Sleep broods o'er all the house : the mother's heart,
Beating within her husband's folding arms,
Dreams of sweet looks of waking happiness,
Unceasing greetings of congenial thought,
Deep blendings of existence ; till awoke

By the long stirring of delightful dreams,
She with a silent prayer of thankfulness
Leans gently-breathing on the breast of love !

Can guilt or misery ever enter here ?
Ah ! no ; the spirit of domestic peace,
Though calm and gentle as the brooding dove,
And ever murmuring forth a quiet song,
Guards, powerful as the sword of cherubim,
The hallow'd porch. She hath a heavenly smile
That sinks into the sullen soul of vice,
And wins him o'er to virtue, so transforms
The purpose of his heart, that sudden shame
Smothers the curses struggling into birth,
And makes him turn an eye of kindness
Even on the blessings that he came to blast.
It is a lofty thought, O guardian love !
To think that he who lives beneath thine eye
Can never be polluted. Pestilence,
The dire, contagious pestilence of sin
May walk abroad, and lay its victims low ;
But they, whose upright spirits worship thee,
Breathe not the tainted air—they live apart
Unharm'd, as Israel's heaven-protected sons,
When the exterminating angel pass'd
With steps of blood o'er Egypt's groaning land.

Then ever keep unbroken and unstained
The Sabbath-sanctity of home ; the shrine
Where spirit in its rapture worships God.
By Heaven beloved for ever are the walls
That duly every morn and evening hear
Our whisper'd hymns ! Eternity broods there.
Yea ! like a father smiling on a band
Of happy children, the Almighty One
Dwells in the midst of us, appearing oft
In visible glory, while our filial souls,
Made pure beneath the watching of his eye,
Walk stately in the conscious praise of Heaven !

EDITH AND NORA.

A PASTORAL POET'S DREAM.

SHE hath risen up from her morning prayer,
And chained the waves of her golden hair,
Hath kissed her sleeping sister's cheek,
And breathed the blessing she might not speak,
Lest the whisper should break the dream that smil'd
Round the snow-white brow of the sinless child.
Her radiant Lamb and her purpling Dove
Have ta'en their food from the hand they love ;
The low deep coo and the plaintive bleat
In the morning calm, how clear and sweet !
Ere the Sun has warmed the dawning hours,
She hath watered the glow of her garden flowers,
And welcomed the hum of the earliest Bee
In the moist bloom working drowsily ;
Then up the flow of the rocky rill
She trips away to the pastoral Hill ;

And, as she lifts her glistening eyes
In the joy of her heart to the dewy skies,
She feels that her sainted Parents bless
The life of their Orphan Shepherdess.

'Tis a lonely Glen ! but the happy Child
Hath friends whom she meets in the morning-
wild !

As on she trips, her native stream,
Like her hath awoke from a joyful dream,
And glides away by her twinkling feet,
With a face as bright and a voice as sweet.
In the osier bank the Ouzel sitting,
Hath heard her steps, and away is flitting
From stone to stone, as she glides along,
Then sinks in the stream with a broken song.
The Lapwing, fearless of his nest,
Stands looking round with his delicate crest,
Or a lovelike joy is in his cry,
As he wheels and darts and glances by.
Is the Heron asleep on the silvery sand
Of his little Lake ? Lo ! his wings expand
As a dreamy thought, and withouten dread,
Cloudlike he floats o'er the Maiden's head.
She looks to the birch-wood glade, and lo !
There is browzing there the mountain-roë,

Who lifts up her gentle eyes, nor moves
As on glides the form whom all nature loves.
Having spent in Heaven an hour of mirth,
The Lark drops down to the dewy earth,
And as silence smooths his yearning breast
In the gentle fold of his lowly nest,
The Linnet takes up the hymn, unseen
In the yellow broom or the bracken green.
And now, as the morning-hours are glowing,
From the hillside cots the cocks are crowing,
And the Shepherd's Dog is barking shrill
From the mist fast rising from the hill,
And the Shepherd's-self, with locks of gray,
Hath blessed the Maiden on her way !
And now she sees her own dear flock
On a verdant mound beneath the rock,
All close together in beauty and love,
Like the small fair clouds in heaven above,
And her innocent soul at the peaceful sight
Is swimming o'er with a still delight.

And how shall sweet Edith pass the day,
From her home and her sister so far away,
With none to whom she may speak the while,
Or share the silence and the smile,
When the stream of thought flows calm and deep,
And the face of Joy is like that of sleep ?

Fear not—the long, still Summer-day
On downy wings hath sailed away,
And is melting unawares in Even,
Like a pure cloud in the heart of Heaven,
Nor Weariness nor Woe hath paid
One visit to the happy Maid
Sitting in sunshine or in shade.
For many a wild Tale doth she know,
Framed in these valleys long ago
By pensive Shepherds, unto whom
The sweet breath of the heather-bloom
Brought inspiration, and the Sky
Folding the hill-tops silently,
And airs so spirit-like, and streams
Aye murmuring through a world of dreams.
A hundred plaintive tunes hath she—
A hundred chaunts of sober glee—
And she hath sung them o'er and o'er,—
As on some solitary shore,
'Tis said the Mermaid oft doth sing
Beneath some cliffs o'ershadowing,
While melteth o'er the waters clear
A song which there is none to hear !
Still at the close of each wild strain
Hath gentle Edith lived again

O'er long-past hours—while smiles and sighs
Obeyed their own loved Melodies.
Now rose to sight the hawthorn-glade,
Where that old blind Musician played
So blithely to the dancing ring—
Or, in a fit of sorrowing,
Sung mournful Songs of other years
That filled his own dim eyes with tears.
And then the Sabbath seemed to rise
In stillness o'er the placid skies,
And from the small Kirk in the Dell
Came the clear chime of holy Bell.
Solemnly ceasing, when appeared
The grey-haired Man beloved and feared—
The Man of God—whose eyes were filled
With visions in the heavens beheld,
And rightfully inspired fear,
Whose yoke, like Love's, is light to bear.
—And thus sole-sitting on the Brae,
From human voices far away,
Even like the flowers round Edith's feet,
Shone forth her fancies wild or sweet ;
Some in the shades of memory
Unfolding out reluctantly,
But breathing from that tender gloom
A faint—etherial—pure perfume ;

Some burning in their full-blown pride,
And by the Sun's love beautified ;
None wither'd—for the air is holy,
Of a pure spirit's melancholy ;
And God's own gracious eye hath smiled
On the sorrows of this Orphan Child ;
Therefore, her Parents' Grave appears
Green, calm, and sunbright through her tears,
Beneath the deep'ning hush of years.

An Image of young Edith's Life,
This one still day—no noise—no strife—
Alike calm—morning—noon—and even—
And Earth to her as pure as Heaven. ,

Now night comes wavering down the sky :
The clouds like ships at anchor lie,
All gathered in the glimmering air,
After their pleasant voyage : there
One solitary bark glides on
So slow, that its haven will ne'er be won.
But a wandering wind hath lent it motion,
And the last Sail hath passed o'er the heavenly ocean.
Are these the Hills so steeped by day,
In a greenness that seemed to mock decay,

And that stole from the Sun so strong and light,
That it well might dare th' eclipse of night ?
Where is the sound that filled the air
Around—and above—and every where ?
Soft wild pipes hushed ! and a world of wings
All shut with their radiant shiverings !
The wild bees now are all at rest
In their earthen cell—or their mossy nest—
Save when some lated labourers come
From the far-off hills with a weary hum,
And drop down 'mid the flowers, till morn
Shall awaken to life each tiny horn.
Dew sprinkles sleep on every flower,
And each bending stalk has lost its power—
No toils have they, but in beauty blest,
They seem to partake in Nature's rest.
Sleep calms the bosom of the Earth,
And a dream just moves it in faintest mirth.

The slumber of the Hills and Sky
Hath hushed into a reverie
The soul of Edith—by degrees,
With half-closed eyes she nothing sees
But the glimmer of twilight 'stretched afar,
And one bright solitary star,

That comes like an angel with his beams,
To lead her on through the world of dreams,
She feels the soft grass beneath her head,
And the smell of flowers around her shed,
Breathing of Earth,—as yet, she knows
Whence is the sound that past her flows,
(The flowery fount in its hillside cell)
But a beauty there is which she cannot tell
To her soul that beholds it, spread all around ;
And she feels a rapture, oh ! more profound .
Than e'er by a dream was breathed, or driven
Through a bosom, all suddenly filled with heaven.

Oh ! come ye from heaven ye blessed Things,
So silent with your silvery wings
Folded in moonlight glimmerings ?
—They have dropt like two soft gleams of light,
Those gracious Forms, on the verdant height
Where Edith in her slumber lies,
With calm face meeting the calm skies,
Like one whose earthly course is o'er,
And sleepeth to awake no more !
Gazing upon the Child they stand,
Till one with small soft silent hand
Lifts from that brow the golden hair—
“ Was ever mortal face so fair ?

God gives to us the sleeping maid !”
And scarcely are the kind words said,
Than Edith’s lovely neck is wreathed
With arms as soft as zephyrs breathed
O’er sleeping lilies,—and slowly raised
The still form of the child, amazed
To see those visages divine,
And eyes so filled with pity, shine
On her, a simple Shepherdess,
An orphan in the wilderness !

“ O, happy child ! who livest in mirth
And joy of thine own on this sinful Earth,
Whose heart, like a lonely stream, keeps singing,
Or, like a holy bell, is ringing
So sweetly in the silent wild—
Wilt thou come with us, thou happy child,
And live in a land where woe and pain
Are heard but as a far-off strain
Of mournful music,—where the breath
Of Life is murmuring not of Death ;
And Happiness alone doth weep,
And nought but Bliss doth break our sleep.
Wilt thou come with us to the ‘Land of Dreams ?’
—A kiss as soft as moonlight seems

To fall on Edith's brow and cheek—
As that voice no more is heard to speak ;
And bright before her half-closed eyes
Stand up these Shapes from Paradise,
Breathing sweet fear into her heart !
—She trembleth lest their beauty part,
Cloudlike, ere she be full awake,
And leave her weeping for their sake,
An orphan Shepherdess again,
Left all by herself in that lonely glen !

“ Fear not, sweet Edith ! to come along
With us, though the voice of the Fairy's Song
Sound strange to thy soul thus murmuring near—
Fear not, for thou hast nought to fear !
Oft hast thou heard our voice before,
Hymnlike pass by thy cottage door
When thou and thy sister were at prayers,—
Oft hast thou heard it in wild low airs,
Circling thy couch on the heathery hill,—
And when all the stars in heaven were still,
As their images in the lake below,
That was our voice that seemed to flow,
Like softest waters through the night,
The music breathed from our delight.

Then, come with us, sweet Edith ! come
And dwell in the Lake-Fairy's home ;
And happier none can be in heaven,
Then we in those green vallies, given
By Nature's kind beneficence
To us, who live in innocence ;
And on our gentle missions go,
Up to the human world of woe,
To make by our music mortal Elves
For a dream as happy as ourselves ;
All flitting back e'er the morn arise,
To our own untroubled Paradise."

" O waft me there, ere my dream is gone,
For dreams have a wild world all their own !
And never was vision like to this—
O waft me away ere I wake from bliss !
But where is my little sister ? Where
The child whom her mother with dying prayer
Put into my bosom, and bade us be
True to each other, as on the sea
Two loving birds, whom a wave may divide,
But who float back soon to each other's side !
Bring Nora here, and we two will take
Our journey with you deep down the Lake,

And let its waters for ever close
O'er the upper world of human woes,
For young though we be, and have known no strife,
Yet we start at the shadows of mortal life ;
And many a tear have we two shed
In each other's arms, on an orphan bed,—
So let Nora to my heart be given,
And with you will we fly, and trust in Heaven."

A sound of parting wings is heard,
As when at night some wandering bird
Flits by us, absent from its nest
Beyond the hour of the Songster's rest.
For, the younger Fairy away hath flown,
And hath Nora found in her sleep alone,
Hath raised her up between her wings,
And lulled her with gentlest murmurings,
And borne her over plain and steep
With soft smooth glide that breaks not sleep,
And laid her down as still as death
By Edith's side on the balmy heath,
And all ere twice ten waves have broke
On the Lake's smooth sand, or the aged oak
Hath ceased to shiver its leaves so red
Beneath the breeze that just touched its head.

The heath-flowers all are shining bright,
And every star has its own soft light,
And all the quiet clouds are there,
And the same sweet sound is in the air,
From stream and echo mingling well
In the silence of the glimmering dell,—
But no more is seen the radiant fold
Of Fairy-wings bedropt with gold,
Nor those sweet human faces ! They
Have melted like the dew away,
And Edith and Nora never more
Shall be sitting seen on the earthly shore !
For they drift away with peaceful motion,
Like birds into the heart of ocean,
Some silent spot secure from storms—
Who float on with their soft-plumed forms
Whiter than the white sea-foam,
Still dancing on from home to home ;
Fair Creatures ! in their lonely glee
Happier than Stars in Heaven or Sea.

Long years are past—and every stone
Of the Orphans' cot is with moss o'ergrown,
And wild-stalks beautiful and tall
Hang o'er the little garden-wall,

And the clear well within the rock
Lies with its smiling calm unbroke
By dipping pitcher ! There the Hives !
But no faint feeble hum survives—
Dead is that Cottage once so sweet,
Shrouded as in a winding-sheet—
Nor even the sobbing of the air
Mourns o'er the life that once was there !

O happy ye ! who have flown afar
From the sword of those ruthless men of war,
That, for many a year, have bathed in blood
Scotland's green glens of solitude !
Orphans were ye—but your lips were calm
When together ye sang the evening psalm ;
Nor sound of terror on the breeze,
E'er startled you up from your humble knees,
When on the dewy daisied sod,
In heaven ye worshipp'd your Father's God,
After the simple way approved
By men whom God and Angels loved.
Dark—dark days come—when holy prayers
Are sinful held, and snow-white hairs
By ruffian hands are torn and strewed,
Even where the Old Man bows to God !
Sabbath is heavy to the soul,
When no kirk-bell is heard to toll,

Struck dumb as ice—no bridal show
Shines cheerful through these days of woe ;
Now are the blest baptismal rites
Done by lone streams, in moonless nights ;
Now every lover loves in dread ;
Sleeps flies from cradle and from bed ;
The silent meal in fear is blest ;
In fear the mother gives her breast
To the infant, whose dim eyes can trace
A trouble in her smiling face.
The little girl her hair has braided,
Over a brow by terror shaded ;
And virgins, in youth's lovely years,
Who fear not death, have far worse fears.
Wailing is heard o'er all the land,
For, by day and night, a bloody hand
A bloody sword doth widely wave,
And peace is none, but in the grave.

But Edith and Nora lead happy hours
In the Queen Lake-Fairy's palace-bowers,
Nor troubles from the world of ill
E'er reach that kingdom calm and still,
A dream-like kingdom sunk below,
The fatal reach of waking woe !
There, radiant water-drops are shed,
Like strings of pearl round each Orphan's head,

Glistening with many a lovely ray,
Yet, all so light, that they melt away,
Unfelt by the locks they beautify—
The flowers that bloom there never die,
Breathing for ever through the calm
A gentle breath of honeyed balm ;
Nor ever happy Fairy grieves
O'er the yellow fall of the Forest leaves ;
Nor mourns to hear the rustling dry
Of their faded pride in the frosty sky ;
For all is young and deathless there,
All things unlike—but all things fair.
Nor is that saddest beauty known
That lies in the thoughts of pleasure flown ;
Nor doth joy ever need to borrow
A charm to its soul from the smiles of sorrow.

Nor are the upper world and skies
Withheld, when they list, from these Orphans' eyes—
The shadow of green trees on earth
Falls on the Lake—and the small bird's mirth
Doth often through the silence ring
In sweet, shrill, merry jargoning—
So that the Orphans almost think
They are lying again on the broomy brink

Of their native Dee—and scarcely know
If the change hath been to bliss or woe,
As, 'mid that music wild, they seem
To start back to life from a fairy dream.
So all that most beautiful is above
Sends down to their rest its soul of love ;
Nor have they in their bliss forgot
The walls, roof, and door, of their native cot ;
Nor the bed in which their Parents died,
And they themselves slept side by side !
They know that Heaven hath brought them here,
To shield them from the clouds of fear ;
And therefore on their sinless breasts
When they go to sleep the Bible rests,
The Bible that they read of old,
Beside their lambs in the mountain-fold,
Unseen but by one gracious eye,
That blest their infant piety !

On what doth the wondering shepherd gaze,
As o'er Loch-Ken the moonlight plays,
And in the Planet's silvery glow,
Far shines the smooth sand, white as snow ?
In Heaven or Lake there is no breeze,
Yet a glimmering Sail that Shepherd sees,

Swanlike steer on its stately way
Into the little Crescent bay ;
Now jocundly its fair gleam rearing,
And now in darkness disappearing,
Till 'mid the water-lilies riding
It hangs, and to the green shore gliding
Two lovely Creatures silently
Sit down beneath the star-light sky,
And look around, in deep delight,
On all the pure still smiles of night.
As they sit in beauty on the shore,
The Shepherd feels he has seen before
The quiet of their heavenly eyes :
“ 'Tis the Orphans come back from paradise,
Edith and Nora ! They now return,
When this woe-worn Land hath ceased to mourn.
We thought them dead, but at Heaven's command,
For years they have lived in Fairy Land,
And they glide back by night to their little cot,
O absent long, but by none forgot !”

The boat with its snow-white sail is gone,
And the Creatures it brought to shore are flown
Still the crowd of water-lilies shake,
And a long bright line shines o'er the Lake,

But nought else tells that a bark was near ;
While the wildered Shepherd seems to hear
A wild hymn wandering through the wood,
Till it dies up the mountain solitude ;
And a dreamy thought, as the sounds depart,
Of Edith and Nora comes o'er his heart.

At Morning's first pure silent glow,
A band of simple Shepherds go
To the Orphans' Cot, and there they behold
The Dove so bright, with its plumes of gold,
And the radiant Lamb, that used to glide
So spirit-like by fair Edith's side.
Fair Creatures ! that no more were seen
On the sunny thatch or the flowery green,
Since the lovely Sisters had flown away,
And left their Cottage to decay !
Back to this world returned again,
They seem in sadness and in pain,
And coo and bleat is like the breath -
Of sorrow mourning over death.

Lo ! smiling on their rushy bed,
Lie Edith and Nora—embraced—and dead !
A gentle frost has closed their eyes,
And hushed—just hushed—their balmy sighs.

Over their lips, yet rosy red,
A faint, pale, cold decay is shed ;
A dimness hangs o'er their golden hair,
That sadly tells no life is there ;
There beats no heart, no current flows
In bosoms sunk in such repose ;
Limbs may not that chill quiet have,
Unless laid ready for the grave.
Silence lies there from face to feet,
And the bed she loves best is a winding-sheet.

Let the Coffin sink down soft and slowly,
And calm be the burial of the holy !
One long look in that mournful cell—
Let the green turf heave—and then, farewell !
No need of tears ! in this church-yard shade
Oft had the happy Orphans played
Above these quiet graves ! and well they lie
After a calm bright life of purity,
Beneath the flowers that once sprung to meet
The motion of their now still feet !
The mourners are leaving the buried clay,
To the holy hush of the Sabbath-day,
When a Lamb comes sadly bleating by,
And a Dove soft wavering through the sky,

And both lie down without a sound,
In beauty on the funeral mound !
What may these lovely creatures be ?
—Two sisters who died in infancy,
And thus had those they loved attended,
And been by those they loved befriended !
Whate'er—fair Creatures ! might be their birth,
Never more were they seen on earth ;
But to young and old belief was given
That with Edith and Nora they went to Heaven.

LINES

WRITTEN IN A LONELY BURIAL GROUND ON THE
NORTHERN COAST OF THE HIGHLANDS.

How mournfully this burial ground
Sleeps 'mid old Ocean's solemn sound,
Who rolls his bright and sunny waves
All round these deaf and silent graves !
The cold wan light that glimmers here,
The sickly wild-flowers may not cheer ;
If here, with solitary hum,
The wandering mountain-bee doth come,
'Mid the pale blossoms short his stay,
To brighter leaves he booms away.
The Sea-bird, with a wailing sound,
Alighteth softly on a mound,
And, like an image, sitting there
For hours amid the doleful air,

Seemeth to tell of some dim union,
 Some wild and mystical communion,
 Connecting with his parent Sea
 This lonesome, stoneless Cemetery.

This may not be the Burial-place
 Of some extinguished kingly race,
 Whose name on earth no longer known
 Hath moulder'd with the mouldering stone.
 That nearest grave, yet brown with mould,
 Seems but one summer-twilight old ;
 Both late and frequent hath the bier
 Been on its mournful visit here,
 And yon green spot of sunny rest
 Is waiting for its destined guest.

I see no little kirk—no bell
 On Sabbath tinkleth through this dell.
 How beautiful those graves and fair,
 That, lying round the house of prayer,
 Sleep in the shadow of its grace !
 But death has chosen this rueful place
 For his own undivided reign !
 And nothing tells that e'er again
 The sleepers will forsake their bed—
 Now, and for everlasting dead,
 For Hope with Memory seems fled !.

Wild-screaming Bird ! unto the Sea
 Winging thy flight reluctantly,
 Slow-floating o'er these grassy tombs
 So ghost-like, with thy snow-white plumes,
 At once from thy wild shriek I know
 What means this place so steep'd in wo !
 Here, they who perished on the deep
 Enjoy at last unrocking sleep,
 For Ocean, from his wrathful breast,
 Flung them into this haven of rest,
 Where shroudless, coffinless they lie,—
 'Tis the shipwreck'd seaman's cemetery.

Here seamen old, with grizzled locks,
 Shipwreck'd before on desert rocks,
 And by some wandering vessel taken
 From sorrows that seem God-forsaken,
 Home-bound, here have met the blast
 That wreck'd them on Death's shore at last !
 Old friendless men, who had no tears
 To shed, nor any place for fears
 In hearts by misery fortified,—
 And, without terror, sternly died.
 Here, many a creature, moving bright
 And glorious in full manhood's might,

Who dared with an untroubled eye
 The tempest brooding in the sky,
 And loved to hear that music rave,
 And danced above the mountain-wave,
 Hath quaked on this terrific strand,—
 All flung like sea-weeds to the land ;
 A whole crew lying side by side,
 Death-dashed at once in all their pride.
 And here, the bright-haired, fair-faced Boy,
 Who took with him all earthly joy
 From one who weeps both night and day,
 For her sweet Son borne far away,
 Escaped at last the cruel deep,
 In all his beauty lies asleep ;
 While she would yield all hopes of grace
 For one kiss of his pale, cold face !

O I could wail in lonely fear,
 For many a woful ghost sits here,
 All weeping with their fixed eyes !
 And what a dismal sound of sighs
 Is mingling with the gentle roar
 Of small waves breaking on the shore ;
 While ocean seems to sport and play
 In mockery of its wretched prey !

And lo ! a white-winged vessel sails
In sunshine, gathering all the gales
Fast-freshening from yon isle of pines,
That o'er the clear sea waves and shines.
I turn me to the ghostly crowd,
All smeared with dust, without a shroud,
And silent every blue-swollen lip !
Then gazing on the sunny ship,
And listening to the gladsome cheers
Of all her thoughtless mariners,
I seem to hear in every breath
The hollow under-tones of Death,
Who, all unheard by those who sing,
Keeps tune with low wild murmuring,
And points with his lean boney hand
To the pale ghosts sitting on this strand,
Then dives beneath the rushing prow,
Till on some moonless night of wo
He drives her shivering from the steep
Down—down a thousand fathoms deep.

THE
FRENCH EXILE.

MY Mary ! wipe those tears away
That dim thy lovely eyes,
Nor, on that wild, romantic lay,
That leads through fairy worlds astray,
Waste all thy human sighs.
Come hither on the lightsome wing
Of innocence, and with thee bring
Thy smiles that warmly fall
Into the heart with sunny glow ;
When once he tunes his harp to sing,
Thou wilt not be in haste to go.—
—The Minstrel's in the Hall !

Quickly she started from her seat,
With blushing, virgin-grace ;

Her long hair floating like a stream,
While through it shone with tender gleam
Her calm and pensive face !
Soon as she heard the Minstrel's name,
Across her silent cheek there came
A blythe yet pitying ray ;
For often had she heard me tell
Of the French Exile, blind and lame,
Who sung and touched the harp so well—
—Old Louis Fontenaye.

Silent he sat his harp beside,
Upon an antique chair ;
And something of his country's pride
Did, exiled though he was, reside
Throughout his foreign air !
A snow-white dog of Gascon breed,
With ribbands deck'd, was there to lead
His dark steps,—and secure
The paltry alms that traveller threw,
Alms that in truth he much did need,
For every child that saw him, knew
That he was wretched poor.

His harp with figures quaint and rare
Was deck'd, and strange device ;

There, you beheld the mermaid fair
In mirror braid her sea-green hair,
In wild and sportive guise.
There, on the imitated swell
The Tritons blew the wreathed shell
Around some fairy isle ;
—He framed it, when almost a child,
Long ere he left his native dell :
Who saw the antic carving wild
Could scarce forbear to smile.

With silver voice, the lady said,
She knew how well he sung !—
—Starting, he raised his hoary head,
To hear from that kind-hearted maid
His own dear native tongue.
He seem'd as if restored to sight,
So suddenly his eyes grew bright
When that music touch'd his ear ;
The lilied fields of France, I ween,
Before him swam in softened light,
And the sweet waters of the Seine
They all are murmuring near.

Even now, his voice was humbly sad,
Subdued by woe and want ;

So crush'd his heart, no wish he had
To feel for one short moment glad,
That hopeless Emigrant !
—The aged man is young again,
And cheerily chaunts a playful strain
While his face with rapture shines ;—
How rapidly his fingers glance
O'er the glad strings ! his giddy brain
Drinks in the chorus and the dance,
Beneath his clustering vines.

We saw it was a darling tune
With his old heart,—a cheer
That made all pains forgotten soon ;—
Gay look'd he as a bird in June
That loves itself to hear.
Nor undelightful were the lays
That warm and flowery sung the praise
Of France's lovely Queen,
When with the Ladies of her Court,
Like Flora and her train of fays,
She came at summer-eve to sport
Along the banks of Seine.

But fades the sportive roundelay ;
Both harp and voice are still ;

The dear delusion will not stay,
The murmuring Seine flows far away,
Sink cot and vine-clad hill !
Though his cheated soul is wounded sore,
His aged visage dimm'd once more,
The smile will not depart ;
But struggles 'mid the wrinkles there,
For he clings unto the parting shore,
And the morn of life so melting-fair,
Still lingers in his heart.

Ah me ! what touching silentness
Slept o'er the face divine
Of my dear maid ! methought each tress
Hung 'mid the light of tenderness,
Like clouds in soft moonshine.
With artful innocence she tried
In languid smiles from me to hide
Her tears that fell like rain ;—
But when she felt I must perceive
The drops of heavenly pity glide,
She own'd she could not choose but grieve,
So gladsome was the strain !

If when his griefs once more began,
His eyes had been restored,

And met her face so still and wan,
How had that aged, exiled man
The pitying Saint adored !
Yet though the angel light that play'd
Around her face, pierced not the shade
That veil'd his eyeballs dim,—
Yet to his ear her murmurs stole,
And, with a faltering voice, he said
That he felt them sink into his soul
Like the blessed Virgin's hymn !

He pray'd that Heaven its flowers would strew
On both our heads through life,
With such a tone, as told he knew
She was a virgin fond and true,
Mine own betrothed wife !
And something too he strove to say
In praise of our green isle,—how they
Her generous children, though at war
With France, and both on field and wave
Encountering oft in fierce array,
Would not from home or quiet grave
Her exiled sons debar !

Long was the aged Harper gone
Ere Mary well could speak,—

So I cheer'd her soul with loving tone,
And, happy that she was my own,
I kiss'd her dewy cheek.
And, when once more I saw the ray
Of mild-returning pleasure play
Within her glistening eyes,
I bade the gentle maiden go
And read again that Fairy lay,
Since she could weep, 'mid fancied woe,
O'er real miseries.

THE
THREE SEASONS OF LOVE.

WITH laughter swimming in thine eye,
That told youth's heartfelt revelry ;
And motion changeful as the wing
Of swallow waken'd by the spring ;
With accents blythe as voice of May
Chaunting glad Nature's roundelay ;
Circled by joy like planet bright
That smiles 'mid wreathes of dewy light,
Thy image such, in former time,
When thou, just entering on thy prime,
And woman's sense in thee combined
Gently with childhood's simplest mind,
First taught'st my sighing soul to move
With hope towards the heaven of love !

Now years have given my Mary's face
A thoughtful and a quiet grace :—

Though happy still,—yet chance distress
Hath left a pensive loveliness ;
Fancy hath tamed her fairy gleams,
And thy heart broods o'er home-born dreams !
Thy smiles, slow-kindling now and mild,
Shower blessings on a darling child ;
Thy motion slow, and soft thy tread,
As if round thy hush'd infant's bed !
And when thou speak'st, thy melting tone,
That tells thy heart is all my own,
Sounds sweeter, from the lapse of years,
With the wife's love, the mother's fears !

By thy glad youth, and tranquil prime
Assured, I smile at hoary time !
For thou art doom'd in age to know
The calm that wisdom steals from woe ;
The holy pride of high intent,
The glory of a life well-spent.
When, earth's affections nearly o'er,
With Peace behind, and Faith before,
Thou render'st up again to God,
Untarnish'd by its frail abode,
Thy lustrous soul,—then harp and hymn,
From bands of sister seraphim,
Asleep will lay thee, till thine eye
Open in Immortality.

MY COTTAGE.

One small spot

Where my tired mind may rest and call it *home*.

There is a magic in that little word ;

It is a mystic circle that surrounds

Comforts and virtues never known beyond

The hallowed limit.

Southey's Hymn to the Penates.

HERE have I found at last a home of peace
 To hide me from the world ; far from its noise,
 To feed that spirit, which, though sprung from earth,
 And link'd to human beings by the bond
 Of earthly love, hath yet a loftier aim
 Than perishable joy, and through the calm
 That sleeps amid the mountain-solitude,
 Can hear the billows of eternity,
 And hear delighted.

Many a mystic gleam,
Lovely though faint, of imaged happiness
Fell on my youthful heart, as oft her light
Smiles on a wandering cloud, ere the fair Moon
Hath risen in the sky. And oh ! Ye dreams
That to such spiritual happiness could shape
The lonely reveries of my boyish days,
Are ye at last fulfill'd ? Ye fairy scenes,
That to the doubting gaze of prophecy
Rose lovely, with your fields of sunny green,
Your sparkling rivulets and hanging groves
Of more than rainbow lustre, where the swing
Of woods primeval darken'd the still depth
Of lakes bold-sweeping round their guardian hills
Even like the arms of Ocean, where the roar
Sullen and far from mountain cataract
Was heard amid the silence, like a thought
Of solemn mood that tames the dancing soul
When swarming with delights ;—Ye fairy scenes !
Fancied no more, but bursting on my heart
In living beauty, with adoring song
I bid you hail ! and with as holy love
As ever beautified the eye of saint
Hymning his midnight orisons, to you
I consecrate my life,—till the dim stain
Left by those worldly and unhallow'd thoughts

That taint the purest soul, by bliss destroyed,
My spirit travel like a summer sun,
Itself all glory, and its path all joy.

Nor will the musing penance of the soul,
Performed by moonlight, or the setting sun,
To hymn of swinging oak, or the wild flow
Of mountain-torrent, ever lead her on
To virtue, but through peace. For Nature speaks
A parent's language, and, in tones as mild,
As e'er hush'd infant on its mother's breast,
Wins us to learn her lore. Yea ! even to guilt,
Though in her image something terrible
Weigh down his being with a load of awe,
Love mingles with her wrath, like tender light
Stream'd o'er a dying storm. And thus where'er
Man feels as man, the earth is beautiful.
His blessings sanctify even senseless things,
And the wide world in cheerful loveliness
Returns to him its joy. The summer air,
Whose glittering stillness sleeps within his soul,
Stirs with its own delight : The verdant earth,
Like beauty waking from a happy dream,
Lies smiling : Each fair cloud to him appears
A pilgrim travelling to the shrine of peace ;
And the wild wave, that wantons on the sea,

A gay though homeless stranger. Ever blest
The man who thus beholds the golden chain
Linking his soul to outward Nature fair,
Full of the living God !

And where, ye haunts
Of grandeur and of beauty ! shall the heart,
That yearns for high communion with its God,
Abide, if e'er its dreams have been of you ?
The loveliest sounds, forms, hues, of all the earth
Linger delighted here : Here guilt might come,
With sullen soul abhorring Nature's joy,
And in a moment be restored to Heaven.
Here sorrow, with a dimness o'er his face,
Might be beguiled to smiles,—almost forget
His sufferings, and, in Nature's living book,
Read characters so lovely, that his heart
Would, as it bless'd them, feel a rising swell
Almost like joy !—O earthly paradise !
Of many a secret anguish hast thou healed
Him, who now greets thee with a joyful strain.

And oh ! if in those elevated hopes
That lean on virtue,—in those high resolves
That bring the future close upon the soul,
And nobly dare its dangers ;—if in joy

Whose vital spring is more than innocence,
Yea ! Faith and Adoration !—if the soul
Of man may trust to these,—and they are strong,
Strong as the prayer of dying penitent,—
My being shall be bliss. For witness, Thou !
Oh Mighty One ! whose saving love has stolen
On the deep peace of moon-beams to my heart,—
Thou ! who with looks of mercy oft hast cheer'd
The starry silence, when, at noon of night,
On some wild mountain thou hast not declined
The homage of thy lonely worshipper,—
Bear witness, Thou ! that, both in joy and grief,
The love of nature long hath been with me
The love of virtue :—that the solitude
Of the remotest hills to me hath been
Thy temple :—that the fountain's happy voice
Hath sung thy goodness, and thy power has stunn'd
My spirit in the roaring cataract !

Such solitude to me ! Yet are there hearts,—
Worthy of good men's love, nor unadorn'd
With sense of moral beauty,—to the joy
That dwells within the Almighty's outward shrine,
Senseless and cold. Aye, there are men who see
The broad sun sinking in a blaze of light,
Nor feel their disembodied spirits hail

With adoration the departing God ;
Who on the night-sky, when a cloudless moon
Glides in still beauty through unnumbered stars,
Can turn the eye unmoved, as if a wall
Of darkness screen'd the glory from their souls.
With humble pride I bless the Holy One
For sights to these denied. And oh ! how oft
In seasons of depression,—when the lamp
Of life burn'd dim, and all unpleasant thoughts
Subdued the proud aspirings of the soul,—
When doubts and fears withheld the timid eye
From scanning scenes to come, and a deep sense
Of human frailty turn'd the past to pain,
How oft have I remember'd that a world
Of glory lay around me, that a source
Of lofty solace lay in every star,
And that no being need behold the sun,
And grieve, that knew WHO hung him in the sky.
Thus unperceived I woke from heavy grief
To airy joy : and seeing that the mind
Of man, though still the image of his God,
Lean'd by his will on various happiness,
• I felt that all was good ; that faculties,
Though low, might constitute, if rightly used,
True wisdom ; and when man hath here attain'd
The purpose of his being, he will sit

Near Mercy's throne, whether his course hath been
Prone on the earth's dim sphere, or, as with wing
Of viewless eagle, round the central blaze.

Then ever shall the day that led me here
Be held in blest remembrance. I shall see,
Even at my dying hour, the glorious sun
That made Winander one wide wave of gold,
When first in transport from the mountain-top
I hail'd the heavenly vision! Not a cloud,
Whose wreaths lay smiling in the lap of light,
Not one of all those sister-isles that sleep
Together, like a happy family
Of beauty and of love, but will arise
To cheer my parting spirit, and to tell
That Nature gently leads unto the grave
All who have read her heart, and kept their own
In kindred holiness.

But ere that hour
Of awful triumph, I do hope that years
Await me, when the unconscious power of joy
Creating wisdom, the bright dreams of soul
•Will humanize the heart, and I shall be
More worthy to be loved by those whose love
Is highest praise :—that by the living light

That burns for ever in affection's breast,
I shall behold how fair and beautiful
A human form may be.—Oh, there are thoughts
That slumber in the soul, like sweetest sounds
Amid the harp's loose strings, till airs from Heaven
On earth, at dewy night-fall, visitant,
Awake the sleeping melody ! Such thoughts,
My gentle Mary, I have owed to thee.
And if thy voice e'er melt into my soul
With a dear home-toned whisper,—if thy face
E'er brighten in the unsteady gleams of light
From our own cottage-hearth ;—O Mary ! then
My overpowered spirit will recline
Upon thy inmost heart, till it become,
O sinless seraph ! almost worthy thee.

Then will the earth,—that oft-times to the eye
Of solitary lover seems o'erhung
With too severe a shade, and faintly smiles
With ineffectual beauty on his heart,—
Be clothed with everlasting joy ; like land
Of blooming faëry, or of boyhood's dreams
Ere life's first flush is o'er, Oft shall I turn
My vision from the glories of the scene
To read them in thine eyes ; and hidden grace,
That slumbers in the crimson clouds of Even,

Will reach my spirit through their varying light,
Though viewless in the sky. Wandering with thee,
A thousand beauties never seen before
Will glide with sweet surprise into my soul,
Even in those fields where each particular tree
Was look'd on as a friend,—where I had been
Frequent, for years, among the lonely glens.

Nor, 'mid the quiet of reflecting bliss,
Will the faint image of the distant world
Ne'er float before us:—Cities will arise
Among the clouds that circle round the sun,
Gorgeous with tower and temple. The night-voice
Of flood and mountain to our ear will seem
Like life's loud stir;—And, as the dream dissolves,
With burning spirit we will smile to see
Only the Moon rejoicing in the sky,
And the still grandeur of the eternal hills.

Yet, though the fulness of domestic joy
Bless our united beings, and the home
Be ever happy where thy smiles are seen,
Though human voice might never touch our ear
From lip of friend or brother;—yet, oh! think
What pure benevolence will warm our hearts,
When with the undelaying steps of love

Through yon o'ershadowing wood we dimly see
A coming friend, far distant then believed,
And all unlook'd-for. When the short distrust
Of unexpected joy no more constrains,
And the eye's welcome brings him to our arms,
With gladden'd spirit he will quickly own
That true love ne'er was selfish, and that man
Ne'er knew the whole affection of his heart
Till resting on another's. If from scenes
Of noisy life he come, and in his soul
The love of Nature, like a long-past dream,
If e'er it stir, yield but a dim delight,
Oh! we shall lead him where the genial power
Of beauty, working by the wavy green
Of hill-ascending wood, the misty gleam
Of lakes reposing in their peaceful vales,
And, lovelier than the loveliness below,
The moonlight Heaven, shall to his blood restore
An undisturbed flow, such as he felt
Pervade his being, morning, noon, and night,
When youth's bright years pass'd happily away,
Among his native hills, and all he knew
Of crowded cities, was from passing tale
Of traveller, half-believed, and soon forgotten.

And fear not, Mary! that, when winter comes,
These solitary mountains will resign

The beauty that pervades their mighty frames,
 Even like a living soul. The gleams of light
 Hurrying in joyful tumult o'er the cliffs,
 And giving to our musings many a burst
 Of sudden grandeur, even as if the eye
 Of God were wandering o'er the lovely wild,
 Pleased with his own creation ;—the still joy
 Of cloudless skies ; and the delighted voice
 Of hymning fountains,—these will leave awhile
 The altered earth :—But other attributes
 Of Nature's heart will rule, and in the storm
 We shall behold the same prevailing Power
 That slumbers in the calm, and sanctify,
 With adoration, the delight of love.

* * * * *

I lift my eyes upon the radiant Moon,
 That long unnoticed o'er my head has held
 Her solitary walk, and as her light
 Recals my wandering soul, I start to feel
 That all has been a dream. Alone I stand
 Amid the silence. Onward rolls the stream
 Of time, while to my ear its waters sound
 With a strange rushing music. O my soul !
 Whate'er betide, for aye remember thou
 These mystics warnings, for they are of Heaven.

LINES

WRITTEN ON THE BANKS OF WINANDERMERE, ON
RECOVERY FROM A DANGEROUS ILLNESS.

ONCE more, dear Lake ! along thy banks I rove,
And bless thee in my heart that flows with love.
Methinks, as life's awakening embers burn,
Nature rejoices in her son's return ;
And, like a parent after absence long,
Sings from her heart of hearts a cheerful song.
Oh ! that fresh breeze through all my being stole,
And made sweet music in my gladden'd soul !
To me just rescued from the opening grave,
How bright the radiance of the dancing wave !
A gleam of joy, a soft endearing smile,
Plays 'mid the greenness of each sylvan isle,
And, in the bounty of affection, showers
A loving welcome o'er these blissful bowers.

Quick glides the hymning streamlet, to partake
 The deep enjoyment of the happy lake ;
 The pebbles, sparkling through the yellow brook,
 Seem to my gaze to wear a livelier look ;
 And little wild-flowers, that in careless health
 Lay round my path in unregarded wealth,
 In laughing beauty court my eyes again,
 Like friends unchanged by coldness or disdain.
 Now life and joy are one :—to Earth, Air, Heaven,
 An undisturbed jubilee is given ;
 While, happy as in dreams, I seem to fly,
 Skimming the ground, or soaring through the sky,
 And feel, with sudden life-pervading glee,
 As if this rapture all were made for me.

And well the glory to my soul is known ;
 For mystic visions stamped it as my own.
 While sickness lay, like ice, upon my breath,
 With eye prophetic, through the shades of death
 That brooded o'er me like a dreary night,
 This beauteous scene I saw in living light.
 No friend was near me : and a heavy gloom
 Lay in deep silence o'er the lonely room ;
 Even hope had fled ; and as in parting strife
 My soul stood trembling on the brink of life,—

When lo ! sweet sounds, like those that now I hear,
Of stream and zephyr stole into my ear.
• Far through my heart the mingled music ran,
Like tones of mercy to a dying man.
Beneath the first light of the morning's mirth,
Like new-waked beauty lay the dewy earth ;
The mighty sun I saw, as now I see,
And my soul shone with kindred majesty :
Calm smiled the Lake ; and from that smile arose
Faith, hope, and trust, oblivion of my woes :
I felt that I should live ; nor could despair
Bedim a scene so glorious, and so fair.

Now is the vision truth. Disease hath flown,
And in the midst of joy I stand alone.
The eye of God is on me : the wide sky
Is sanctified with present Deity,
And, at his bidding, Nature's aspect mild
Pours healing influence on her wasted child.
My eye now brightens with the brightening scene,
Cheer'd with the hues of kind restoring green ;
As with a lulling sound the fountain flows,
My tingling ear is filled with still repose ;
The summer silence, sleeping on the plain,
Sends settled quiet to my dizzy brain ;

And the moist freshness of the glittering wood
Cools with a heart-felt dew my feverish blood.

O blessed Lake ! thy sparkling waters roll
Health to my frame, and rapture to my soul.
Emblem of peace, of innocence, and love !
Sleeping in beauty given thee from above :
This earth delighting in thy gentle breast,
And the glad heavens attending on thy rest !
Can he e'er turn from virtue's quiet bowers,
All fragrant dropping with immortal flowers,
Whose inward eye, as with a magic art,
Beholds thy glory imaged in his heart ?
No ! he shall live, from guilt and vice afar,
As in the silent Heavens some lonely star.
A light shall be around him to defend
The holy head of Nature's bosom friend.
And if the mists of error e'er should come
To that bright sphere where virtue holds her home,
She has a charm to scare the intruder thence ;
Or, powerful in her spotless innocence,
With one calm look her spirit will transform
To a fair cloud the heralds of the storm.

Nor less, Winander ! to thy power I owe
Rays of delight amid the gloom of woe.

Yes ! oft, when self-tormenting fancy framed
Forms of dim fear that grief has never named ;
When the whole world seem'd void of mental cheer,
Nor spring nor summer in the joyless year,
Oft has thy image of upbraiding love,
Seen on a sudden through some opening grove,
Even like the tender unexpected smile
Of some dear friend I had forgot the while,
In silence said, " My son, why not partake
" The peace now brooding o'er thy darling lake ?
" Oh ! why in sullen discontent destroy
" The law of Nature, Universal Joy ?"

Sweet Lake ! I listen to thy guardian voice :
I look abroad ; and, looking, I rejoice.
My home is here ; ah ! never shall we part,
Till life's last pulse hath left my wasted heart.
True that another land first gave me birth,
And other lakes beheld my infant mirth :
Far from these skies dear friendships have I known,
And still in memory lives their soften'd tone ;
Yet though the image of my earlier years
'Mid Scotland's mountains dim my eyes with tears,
And the heart's day-dreams oft will lingering dwell
On that wild region which she loves so well,—
Think not, sweet Lake ! before my years are told
My love for thee and thine can e'er grow cold :

For here hath Hope fix'd her last earthly bound,
And where Hope rests in peace, is hallow'd ground.

And oh ! if e'er that happy time shall come,
When she I love sits smiling in my home,
And, oft as chance may bid us meet or part,
Speaks the soft word that slides into the heart,
Then fair as now thou art, yea ! passing fair,
Thy scarce-seen waters melting into air,
Far lovelier gleams will dance upon thy breast,
And thine isles bend their trees in deeper rest.
Then will my joy-enlighten'd soul descry
All that is beautiful on land or sky ;
For, when the heart is calm with pure delight,
Revels the soul 'mid many a glorious sight.
The earth then kindles with a vernal grace,
Glad as the laugh upon an infant-face :
The sun himself is clothed with vaster light,
And showers of gentler sadness bathe the night.

Dreams of delight ! while thus I fondly weave
Your fairy-folds, Oh ! can ye e'er deceive ?
Are ye in vain to cheated mortals given,
Lovely impostors in the garb of Heaven ?
Fears, hopes, doubts, wishes, hush my pensive shell,
Fount of them all, dear Lake ! farewell ! farewell !

PICTURE

OF

A BLIND MAN.



WHY sits so long beside yon cottage-door
 That aged man with tresses thin and hoar ?
 Fix'd are his eyes in one continued gaze,
 Nor seem to feel the sun's meridian blaze ;
 Yet are the orbs with youth-like colours bright,
 As o'er the Iris falls the trembling light.
 Changeless his mien ; not even one flitting trace
 Of spirit wanders o'er his furrow'd face ;
 No feeling moves his venerable head :
 —He sitteth there—an emblem of the dead !
 The staff of age lies near him on the seat,
 His faithful dog is slumbering at his feet,
 And yon fair child, who steals an hour for play
 While thus her father rests upon his way,

Her sport will leave, nor cast one look behind,
Soon as she hears his voice,—for he is blind !

List ! as in tones through deep affection mild
He speaks by name to the delighted child !
Then, bending mute in dreams of painful bliss
Breathes o'er her neck a father's tenderest kiss,
And with light hand upon her forehead fair
Smooths the stray ringlets of her silky hair !
A beauteous phantom rises through the night
For ever brooding o'er his darken'd sight,
So clearly imaged both in form and limb,
He scarce remembers that his eyes are dim,
But thinks he sees in truth the vernal wreath
His gentle infant wove, that it might breathe
A sweet restoring fragrance through his breast,
Chosen from the wild-flowers that he loves the best.
In that sweet trance he sees the sparkling glee
That sanctifies the face of infancy ;
The dimpled cheek where playful fondness lies,
And the blue softness of her smiling eyes ;
The spirit's temple unprofaned by tears,
Where God's unclouded loveliness appears ;
Those gleams of soul to every feature given,
When youth walks guiltless by the light of heaven !

And oh ! what pleasures through his spirit burn,
When to the gate his homeward steps return ;
When fancy's eye the curling smoke surveys,
And his own hearth is gaily heard to blaze !
How beams his sightless visage ! ~~when~~ the press
Of Love's known hand, with cheerful tenderness,
Falls on his arm, and leads with guardian care
His helpless footsteps to the accustomed chair ;
When the dear voice he joy'd from youth to hear
With kind enquiry comes unto his ear,
And tremulous tells how lovely still must be
Those fading beauties that he ne'er must see !

•

Though ne'er by him his cottage-home be seen,
Where to the wild brook slopes the daisied green ;
Though the bee, slowly borne on laden wing,
To him be known but by its murmuring ;
And the long leaf that trembles in the breeze
Be all that tells him of his native trees ;
Yet dear to him each viewless object round
Familiar to his soul from touch or sound.
The stream, 'mid banks of osier winding near,
Lulls his calm spirit through the listening ear :
Deeply his soul enjoys the loving strife
When the warm summer air is fill'd with life ;

And as his limbs in quiet dreams are laid,
Blest is the oak's contemporary shade.

Happy old Man ! no vain regrets intrude
On the still hour of sightless solitude.
Though deepest shades o'er outward Nature roll,
Her cloudless beauty lives within thy soul.
—Oft to yon rising mount thy steps ascend,
As to the spot where dwelt a former friend ;
From whose green summit thou could'st once behold
Mountains far-off in dim confusion roll'd,
Lakes of blue mist, where gleam'd the whitening sail,
And many a woodland interposing vale.

Thou seest them still : and oh ! how soft a shade
Does memory breathe o'er mountain, wood, and glade !
Each craggy pass, where oft in sportive scorn
Had sprung thy limbs in life's exulting morn ;
Each misty cataract, and torrent-flood,
Where thou a silent angler oft hast stood ;
Each shelter'd creek where through the roughest day
Floated thy bark without the anchor's stay ;
Each nameless field by nameless thought endear'd ;
Each little hedge-row that thy childhood rear'd,
That seems unalter'd yet in form and size,
Though fled the clouds of fifty summer skies,

Rise on thy soul,—on high devotion springs
Through Nature's beauty borne on Fancy's wings,
And while the blissful vision floats around,
Of loveliest form, fair hue, and melting sound,
Thou carest not, though blindness may not roam,—
For Heaven's own glory smiles around thy home.

PEACE AND INNOCENCE.

THE lingering lustre of a vernal day
From the dim landscape slowly steals away ;
One lovely hour !—and then the stars of Even
Will sparkling hail the apparent Queen of Heaven ;
For the tired Sun, now softly sinking down,
To his fair daughter leaves his silent throne.
Almost could I believe with life embued,
And hush'd in dreams, this gentle solitude.
Look where I may, a tranquillizing soul
Breathes forth a life-like pleasure o'er the whole.
The shadows settling on the mountain's breast
Recline, as conscious of the hour of rest ;
Stedfast as objects in a peaceful dream,
The sleepy trees are bending o'er the stream ;
The stream, half veil'd in snowy vapour, flows
With sound like silence, motion like repose.
My heart obeys the power of earth and sky,
And 'mid the quiet slumbers quietly !

A wreath of smoke, that feels no breath of air,
Melts amid yon fair clouds, itself as fair,
And seems to link in beauteousness and love
That earthly cottage to the domes above.
There my heart rests,—as if by magic bound :
Blessings be on that plat of orchard-ground !
Wreathed round the dwelling like a fairy ring,
Its green leaves lost in richest blossoming.
Within that ring no creature seems alive ;
The bees have ceased to hum around the hive ;
On the tall ash the rooks have roosted long,
And the fond dove hath coo'd his latest song :
Now, shrouded close beneath the holly-bush,
Sits on her low-built nest the sleeping thrush.

All do not sleep : behold a spotless lamb
Looks bleating round, as if it sought its dam.
Its restless motion and its piteous moan
Tell that it fears all night to rest alone,
Though heaven's most gracious dew descends in peace
Softly as snow-flakes on its radiant fleece.
That mournful bleat hath touch'd the watchful ear
Of one to whom the little lamb is dear,
As innocent and lovely as itself !
See where with springs she comes, the smiling elf !

Well does the lamb her infant guardian know :
Joy brightening dances o'er her breast of snow,
And light as flying leaf, with sudden glide,
Fondly she presses to the maiden's side.
With kindness quieting its late alarms,
The sweet child folds it in her nursing arms ;
And calling it by every gentle name
That happy innocence through love can frame,
With tenderest kisses lavish'd on its head,
Conducts it frisking to its shelter'd bed.

Kind hearted infant ! be thy slumbers bland !
Dream that thy sportive lambkin licks thy hand,
Or, wearied out by races short and fleet,
Basks in the sunshine, resting on thy feet ;
That waking from repose, unbroken, deep,
Thou scarce shalt know that thou hast been asleep !
With eye-lids trembling through thy golden hair,
I hear thee lisping low thy nightly prayer.
O sweetest voice ! what beauty breathes therein !
Ne'er hath its music been impaired by sin.
In all its depths my soul shall carry hence
The air serene born of thy innocence.
To me most awful is thy hour of rest,
For little children sleep in Jesus' breast !

LOUGHRIG TARN.

'THOU guardian Naiad of this little Lake,
 Whose banks in unprofaned Nature sleep,
 (And that in waters lone and beautiful
 Dwell spirits radiant as the homes they love,
 Have poets still believed,) O surely blest
 Beyond all genii or of wood or wave,
 Or sylphs that in the shooting sunbeams dwell,
 Art thou ! yea, happier even than summer-cloud
 Beloved by air and sky, and floating slow
 O'er the still bosom of upholding heaven.

Beauteous as blest, O Naiad, thou must be !
 For, since thy birth, have all delightful things,
 Of form and hue, of silence and of sound,
 Circled thy spirit, as the crowding stars
 Shine round the placid Moon. Lov'st thou to sink
 Into thy cell of sleep ? The water parts

With dimpling smiles around thee, and below,
The unsunn'd verdure, soft as cygnet's down,
Meets thy descending feet without a sound.
Lov'st thou to sport upon the watery gleam?
Lucid as air around thy head it lies
Bathing thy sable locks in pearly light,
While, all around, the water lilies strive
To shower their blossoms o'er the virgin queen.
Or doth the shore allure thee?—well it may:
How soft these fields of pastoral beauty melt
In the clear water! neither sand nor stone
Bars herb or wild-flower from the dewy sound,
Like Spring's own voice now rippling round the Tarn.
There oft thou liest 'mid the echoing bleat
Of lambs, that race amid the sunny gleams;
Or bee's wide murmur as it fills the broom
That yellows round thy bed. O gentle glades,
Amid the tremulous verdure of the woods,
In stedfast smiles of more essential light,
Lying like azure streaks of placid sky
Amid the moving clouds, the Naiad loves
Your glimmering alleys, and your rustling bowers;
For there, in peace reclined, her half-closed eye
Through the long vista sees her darling Lake,
Even like herself, diffused in fair repose.

Not undelightful to the quiet breast
Such solitary dreams as now have fill'd
My busy fancy ; dreams that rise in peace,
And thither lead, partaking in their flight
Of human interests and earthly joys.
Imagination fondly leans on truth,
And sober scenes of dim reality
To her seem lovely as the western sky,
To the rapt Persian worshipping the sun.
Methinks this little lake, to whom my heart
Assigned a guardian spirit, renders back
To me, in tenderest gleams of gratitude,
Profounder beauty to reward my hymn.

Long hast thou been a darling haunt of mine,
And still warm blessings gush'd into my heart,
Meeting or parting with thy smiles of peace.
But now, thy mild and gentle character,
More deeply felt than ever, seems to blend
Its essence pure with mine, like some sweet tune
Oft heard before with pleasure, but at last,
In one high moment of inspired bliss,
Borne through the spirit like an angel's song.

This is the solitude that reason loves !
Even he who yearns for human sympathies,

And hears a music in the breath of man,
Dearer than voice of mountain or of flood,
Might live a hermit here, and mark the sun
Rising or setting 'mid the beauteous calm,
Devoutly blending in his happy soul
Thoughts both of earth and heaven !—Yon moun-
tain-side,
Rejoicing in its clustering cottages,
Appears to me a paradise preserved
From guilt by Nature's hand, and every wreath
Of smoke, that from these hamlets mounts to heaven,
In its straight silence holy as a spire
Rear'd o'er the house of God.

Thy sanctity
Time yet hath revered ; and I deeply feel
That innocence her shrine shall here preserve
For ever.—The wild vale that lies beyond,
Circled by mountains trod but by the feet
Of venturous shepherd, from all visitants,
Save the free tempests and the fowls of heaven,
Guards thee ;—and wooded knolls fantastical
Seclude thy image from the gentler dale,
That by the Brathay's often-varied voice
Cheer'd as it winds along, in beauty fades
'Mid the green banks of joyful Windermere !

O gentlest Lake ! from all unhallow'd things
By grandeur guarded in thy loveliness,
Ne'er may thy poet with unwelcome feet
Press thy soft moss embathed in flowery dies,
And shadow'd in thy stillness like the heavens.
May innocence for ever lead me here,
To form amid the silence high resolves
For future life ; resolves, that, born in peace,
Shall live 'mid tumult, and though haply mild
As infants in their play, when brought to bear
On the world's business, shall assert their power
And majesty—and lead me boldly on
Like giants conquering in a noble cause.

This is a holy faith, and full of cheer
To all who worship Nature, that the hours,
Past tranquilly with her, fade not away
For ever like the clouds, but in the soul
Possess a secret silent dwelling-place,
Where with a smiling visage memory sits,
And startles oft the virtuous, with a shew
Of unsuspected treasures. Yea, sweet Lake !
Oft hast thou borne into my grateful heart
Thy lovely presence, with a thousand dreams
Dancing and brightening o'er thy sunny wave,
Though many a dreary mile of mist and snow

Between us interposed. And even now,
When yon bright star hath risen to warn me home,
I bid thee farewell in the certain hope,
That thou, this night, wilt o'er my sleeping eyes
Shed cheering visions, and with freshest joy
Make me salute the dawn. Nor may the hymn
Now sung by me unto thy listening woods,
Be wholly vain,—but haply it may yield
A gentle pleasure to some gentle heart,
Who blessing, at its close, the unknown bard,
May, for his sake, upon thy quiet banks
Frame visions of his own, and other songs
More beautiful, to Nature and to Thee !

WAKING DREAMS.

A FRAGMENT.



O THAT my soul might breathe one touching strain,
 By the gracious Muses destined not to die,
 But murmuring oft, o'er valley, hill, and plain,
 Enrolled 'mid Scotia's native minstrelsy !
 O more than blest the spirit of thy sky,
 Its stormy clouds, its depth of slumb'rous blue,
 And gladly would I close my filial eye
 In the calm fondness of a last adieu,
 Could I but frame one Lay to Thee and Nature true.

In olden time, thy glens were heard to roll
 The voice of song—deep, solemn, and divine,
 That claimed dominion o'er the happy soul,
 Most spirit-like, as from a secret shrine.
 Oft as the dewy Evening Star 'gan shine,

Th' inspired Shepherd sought some lonely cave,
Nor, singing there, beheld its dim decline,
Nor heard, entranced, the Piny Forest rave,
Nor saw the glorious Sun descending to the wave.

The solitary soul, in such recess,
An air-swept lyre, the breath of heaven obey'd ;
And, still his hymns were hymns of tenderness,
Of blissful loves, or earthly bliss decayed.
The Poet died ; and in the dust was laid !
The green Earth hides him in its smiling rest !
For, haply now, the Church-yard is a glade,
Where by the feet of wandering wild-deer prest,
The flowers in morning-dew are glistening o'er his
breast.

Yet Wisdom weeps not o'er such Poets' fate,
Though seeming robb'd of his eternal fame !
The soul whom heaven and genius consecrate,
In Nature's Memory lives without a name.
The beauty of the Wild Flower is the same
To him who loves it for that beauty's sake,
And for that sake alone ! fair is the flame
Of nameless stars that suddenly awake,
And the Earth laughs with light of many a nameless
Lake.

Yet looking now o'er this delightful Earth,
A clinging spirit of immortal love
Is blending with the sweet land of my birth !
As if on field, lake, mountain, glen, and grove,
When I am dead, some part of me might move !
Some faint memorial of my mortal day
Sleeping like moonlight the old woods above !
My soul in sorrow turneth from decay,
O might it live on Earth, embalmed in heavenly
Lay !

Have I not e'er since reason's dawning light
Thee Scotland worshipped with praise and prayer !
Lovely by day, magnificent by night !
Where is the cloud-wrapt hill, the valley fair,
If mortal feet might climb or wander there,
Whose Echo ne'er hath answer'd to my voice ?
The unsunn'd-Glen, the breathless Forest, where
That hath not heard my raptur'd soul rejoice
In Nature's hush divine, her spirit-humbling noise ?

I, like an Eagle, o'er the mountain cliff,
Have soared in dreams as lofty and as lone ;
On air-woven Lakes, I from my fairy skiff
The anchor of my solitude have thrown.
Methinks, that but to me some spots are known !

—Give answer from afar, thou once-seen Glen,
Thou shadowy, silent world of mist and stone,
Thy desert shapes like Images of Men,
In mockery of Man's voice, the small pipe of the
Wren !

. Or answer Thou ! with music and with light,
Thou Vale of Vales ! that to the Evening Star
My soul did consecrate one summer night,
When loth that such sweet darkness should debar
My soul from loveliness it could not mar,
I ask'd that gentle Orb to be the guide
Of one, who from his way had wander'd far,
And soon she led me where my heart espied
Valley and Lakelet bright, by midnight glorified !

Yet to the impulse of such lifeless things
I ne'er so far surrender'd up my dreams,
As not to feel my spirit's folded wings,
Like a bird basking in Life's sunny gleams.
Yea ! whether musing by the moorland streams,
Or in the arms of mountain-silence bound,
From human eyes far off the loveliest gleams
Came smiling o'er the loveliness around,
Yea ! even the trickling dew was like a human
sound.

For other friendships have I learn'd to cherish,
Than with the Sky, the Ocean, and the Earth ;
Lovely they are and pure—but they must perish,
For perishing the fount that gave them birth.
But on the human face immortal mirth,
Or calm than mirth far lovelier may endure ;
Nor shall that heart e'er ache in spiritual dearth,
Nor ever pine for pleasures, high and pure,
Linked to its brother-man, in brotherhood secure.

Among the hills a hundred homes have I ;
My Table in the wilderness is spread ;
In those lone spots, a human smile can buy
Plain fare, kind welcome, and a rushy bed.
O dead to Christian Love ! to nature dead,
Who, when some cottage at the close of day
Hath o'er his soul its cheerful dimness shed,
Feels not that God was with him on his way,
Nor with these simple folks devoutly kneels to pray.

What means the silent Lake, the Cataract's roar,
The snow-like moonshipe on the summer-hill,
Old Ocean thundering o'er his solemn shore,
Or the faint hymning of the infant rill ?
Say, can such things th' immortal Spirit fill
With perfect voice or silence like their own ?
No, in its trance the soul is longing still

For other music ; by one breath o'erthrown,
The Fancy's pageant sinks with its aërial throne.

Where is the radiance, touching as the hue,
Breathed by delight o'er childhood's laughing cheek ?
What glimpse of ether, beauteous as the dew
In eyes whose gazing silence seems to speak
Of something in our souls more hush'd and meek
Than aught that sleeps on sky, earth, sea, or air !
Then turn from such vain images—and seek
True Beauty shrined amid yon golden hair,
Behold yon snow-white brow—her throne, her heaven
is there.

Then, as thou wanderest through thy native vales,
Like wild-flowers spread to cheer thee on thy way,
(Wild-flowers all dancing in the sunny gales,)
Sweet sinless children, smiling in their play,
Will chain thy footsteps oft with fond delay !
Thou see'st, as in some Mere's unclouded glow,
The pure bright morn of being's vernal day,
And, gazing on the heaven that lies below,
Feel'st not to draw thy breath amid this world of woe.

If such the temper of thy heart, what joy
Is rising there, when on some radiant steep

Thou see'st the solitary Shepherd-boy,
(While his white flock amid the sunshine sleep,)
Through all the long day's stillness, lone and deep,
Sitting, unwearied as the gladsome brook
That sings along with many a frolic leap,
While earnestly his unuplifted look
Lives on the yellow page of some old fairy book.

Alone thou need'st not be, though all around
Thy dreaming soul a mountainous region lie
Spread like a sea that heaves without a sound,
Chained in tumultuous silence 'mid the sky.
Cloud-like ascends before thine inward eye
The wreathed smoke, from many a palm-tree grove,
'Mid the still desert mounting silently,
Straight up to heaven ! and, as it fades above,
Looks like some guardian Power that eyes the earth
with love.

Blessings be on yon hill-side cottages !
A starry groupe rejoicing in the mist !
Blest be the leaves, fruit, branches of the trees,
And the thatched roof they shelter ever blest.
Long hath the light of knowledge and of rest
Thence banished sin, and suffering there beguiled ;
That loving angel, Innocence, hath kissed

Frequent the cheek of every rosy child,
And leads them dancing on along the pathless wild.

Ah me ! when wandering at sweet eventide,
'Mid the fair vales of England, as they lay,
Of their own beauty touched with stately pride,
Encircled with the diadem of May !
Here Palace-domes, there dwellings light and gay,
In groves embosomed, or with rosy showers,
Bride-like adorned in beautiful array,
Where, charmed by fragrance, the delighted Hours,
Seemed, as the sun went down, still lingering 'mid the
flowers.

How hath that gorgeous vision in the air,
(Light, music, fragrance, cottage, tower, and dome,)
Melted to nothing ! Thou art smiling there,
Most sweetly smiling through the dewy gloom,
Just as Eve's star and crescent-moon illumine
Heaven's arch, that folds thee in the hush of night,
Wild Hamlet ! In thy quiet's inner room
The wanderer sits, and wonders in delight
On what kind angel's wing hath been his homeward
flight.

* * * * *

MARY.



THREE days before my Mary's death,
We walk'd by Grassmere shore ;
" Sweet Lake !" she said with faltering breath,
" I ne'er shall see thee more !"

Then turning round her languid head,
She look'd me in the face ;
And whisper'd, " When thy friend is dead,
" Remember this lone place."

Vainly I struggled at a smile,
That did my fears betray ;
It seem'd that on our darling isle
Foreboding darkness lay.

My Mary's words were words of truth ;
None now behold the Maid ;

Amid the tears of age and youth,
She in her grave was laid.

Long days, long nights, I ween, were past
Ere ceased her funeral knell ;
But to the spot I went at last
Where she had breath'd "farewell !"

Methought, I saw the phantom stand
Beside the peaceful wave ;
I felt the pressure of her hand—
—Then look'd towards her grave.

Fair, fair beneath the evening sky
The quiet churchyard lay :
The tall pine-grove most solemnly
Hung mute above her clay.

Dearly she loved their arching spread,
Their music wild and sweet,
And, as she wished on her death-bed,
Was buried at their feet.

Around her grave a beauteous fence
Of wild-flowers shed their breath,

Smiling like infant innocence
Within the gloom of death.

Such flowers from bank of mountain-brook
At eve we used to bring,
When every little mossy nook
Betray'd returning Spring.

Oft had I fixed the simple wreath
Upon her virgin breast ;
But now such flowers as form'd it, breathe
Around her bed of rest.

Yet all within my silent soul,
As the hush'd air was calm ;
The natural tears that slowly stole,
Assuaged my grief like balm.

The air that seem'd so thick and dull
For months unto my eye ;
Ah me ! how bright and beautiful
It floated on the sky !

A trance of high and solemn bliss
From purest ether came ;

'Mid such a heavenly scene as this,
Death is an empty name !

The memory of the past return'd
Like music to my heart,—
It seem'd that causelessly I mourn'd,
When we were told to part.

“ God's mercy, to myself I said,
“ To both our souls is given—
“ To me, sojourning on earth's shade,
“ To her—a Saint in Heaven !”

SOLITUDE.

O VALE of visionary rest !
 —Hush'd as the grave it lies
 With heaving banks of tenderest green,
 Yet brightly, happily serene,
 As cloud-vale of the sleepy west
 Reposing on the skies.
 Its reigning spirit may not vary—
 What change can seasons bring
 Unto so sweet, so calm a spot,
 Where every loud and restless thing
 Is like a far-off dream forgot ?
 Mild, gentle, mournful, solitary,
 As if it aye were spring,
 And Nature lov'd to witness here
 The still joys of the infant year,
 'Mid flowers and music wandering glad,
 For ever happy, yet for ever sad.

This little world how still and lone
With that horizon of its own !
And, when in silence falls the night,
With its own Moon how purely bright !
No shepherd's Cot is here—no Shealing
Its verdant roof through trees revealing—
No branchy covert like a nest,
Where the weary woodmen rest,
And their jocund carols sing
O'er the fallen Forest-King.
Inviolatè by human hand
The fragrant white-stem'd birch-trees stand,
With many a green and sunny glade
'Mid their embowering murmurs made
By gradual soft decay—
Where stealing to that little lawn
From secret haunt and half-afraid,
The Doe, in mute affection gay,
At close of eve leads forth her fawn
Amid the flowers to play.
And in that dell's soft bosom, lo !
Where smileth up a cheerful glow
Of water pure as air,
A Tarn by two small streamlets spread
In beauty o'er its waveless bed,

Reflecting in that heaven so still
The birch-grove mid-way up the hill,
And summits green and bare.

How lone ! beneath its veil of dew
That morning's rosy fingers drew,
Seldom shepherd's foot hath prest
One primrose in its sunny rest.
The sheep at distance from the spring
May here her lambkins chance to bring,
Sporting with their shadows airy,
Each like tiny Water-Fairy
Imaged in the lucid lake !
The hive-bee here doth sometimes make
Music, whose sweet murmurings tell
Of his shelter'd straw-roof'd cell
Standing 'mid some garden gay,
Near a cottage far away.
By the lake-side, on a stone
Stands the Heron all alone,
Still as any lifeless thing !
Slowly moves his laggard wing,
And cloud-like floating with the gale
Leaves at last the quiet vale.

THE SISTERS.

SWEET Creature ! issuing like a dream
So softly from that wood !
—She glideth on a sunny gleam—
In youth and innocence so bright,
She lendeth lustre to day-light
And life to solitude !
O'er all her face a radiance fair
That seemeth to be native there !
No transient smile, no burst of joy
Which time or sorrow may destroy,
A soul-breathed calm that ne'er may cease !
The spirit of eternal peace !
The sunshine may forsake the sky,
But the blue depths of ether lie
In stedfast meek serenity.
Onward she walks—with that pure face
Shedding around its gladdening grace

Those cloudless eyes of tenderest blue
Sparkling through a tearlike dew—
That golden hair that floats in air
Fine as the glittering gossamer—
That motion dancing o'er the earth
Without an aim—in very mirth—
That lark-like song whose strengthening measure
Is soaring through the air of pleasure—
—Is she not like the innocent Morn?
When from the slow-unfolding arms
Of Night, she starts in all her charms,
And o'er the glorious earth is borne,
With orient pearls beneath her feet,—
All round her, music warbling sweet,
And o'er her head the fulgent skies
In the fresh light of Paradise.

Lo ! Sadness by the side of Joy !
—With raven tresses on her brow
Braided o'er that glimpse of snow—
O'er her bosom stray locks spread
As if by grief dishevelled—
Unsparkling eyes where smiles appear
More mournful far than many a tear—
Voice most gentle, sad, and slow,
Whose happiest tones still breathe of woe—

As in our ancient Scottish airs
Even joy the sound of sorrow wears—
Motion like a cloud that goes
From deep to more profound repose—
Seems she not in pensive light
Image of the falling night ?
—Still survive faint gleams of day,
But all sinking to decay—
There is almost mirth and gladness,
Temper'd soft with peace and sadness—
Sound comes from the stream and hill,
But the darkening world is still—
The heavens above are bright and holy,
Most beautiful—most melancholy—
And gazing with suspended breath,
We dream of grief—decay—and death !

THE
FAREWELL AND RETURN.

I WENT where two dear friends did dwell,
Husband and Wife—to bid farewell,
Before I left my peaceful home,
Alone through distant lands to roam.
I found them by their sparkling hearth,
In perfect love and inward mirth—
Through virtue happy in themselves,
And sporting with four beauteous Elves,
Who, like the tender flowers of Spring
Mov'd by the zephyr's lightest wing,
Danced here and there in playful guise,
With sunny heads and laughing eyes,
With song of joy and wanton shout—
A happy—restless—maddening rout !

They look unto the opening door,
And all their noisy mirth is o'er !

To graveness sink their wanton wiles,
And blushes hide their struggling smiles.
Quick to their mother's lap they run,
As trembling to be look'd upon—
There half-delighted—half-afraid,
They hide, then slowly raise the head—
And venture thus to look at me
With sweet restraint and bashful glee,
Till the dear child I love the best
With downcast look steals from the rest,
And with an infant's blessed art
Twines her white arms around my heart.

And now the stir—the noise revive !
The little cottage seems alive,
As if a new-awaken'd soul
Like light were gladdening through the whole.
The happy parents smile to see
Their Mary lisping on my knee
With bolder look and freer tone,
As if she felt that seat her own.
While oft her gamesome brothers tried
To win from my protecting side
The little truant maid away,
By taunting jibe and novel play.

But vain both jibe and play to move
An infant's heart when touch'd with love !

Soon evening brings the hour of rest—
And Mary on my loving breast
Hath fallen asleep ! so not to wake
The blessed babe, I gently take
Her guiltless bosom soft and fair,
Unto her bed—and breathe a prayer
That all her future life be spent
Happy as she is innocent !
Near me her joyful parents stand,
Bless me by name and press my hand—
Their mingling tones my spirit meet,
Though always kind now doubly sweet—
A golden chain in concord mild
Links closely Parents—Friend and Child.

Years past along—and lo ! once more
I stand beside that cottage-door ;—
The hour in which I went away
Seems but the eve of yesterday.
Motionless there I linger long,
O'erpower'd with a tumultuous throng
Of memories, fancies, hopes, and fears,
Sinkings of heart, sighs, smiles, and tears.

No cause had I for mournful thought,
Yet in my beating heart there wrought
A dread of something undefined !
While like the hollow midnight wind,
A voice fell sullen on my ear,
“ Think not to find your Mary here !”

A dreary stillness reign'd around
Deep as the hush of burial-ground,
As if all life were banish'd thence
By breath of noisome pestilence.
Not so—I met a ghastly man
With haggard eyes and visage wan ;
In his dim looks so charg'd with woe
My dearest friend I scarce could know.
One moment's pause—then did he fall
Upon my neck—and told me all !
That she my darling girl was dead,
And by his own hands newly laid
Spotless within her spotless shroud—
His voice here died—he wept aloud.

Vainly his tortur'd soul I cheer'd—
When lo ! his wretched Wife appear'd,
Unlike that Wife when last we parted,
Then deeply blest—now broken-hearted.

She gaz'd on me with eye-balls wild,
And shriek'd the name of her dead Child ;
And with convulsive sobs oppress
She fainted on her Husband's breast !
The memory of that happy night
Came o'er her like a sudden blight !
Those gentle looks—those melting smiles—
Those happy shouts—those wanton wiles—
That dreaming face upon its bed—
—Now lying there, pale, cold, and dead !

Ah me ! beneath a beauteous sky
The Fairy-land of peace doth lie,
Through which united Spirits stray
Companions on the destin'd way
That leads to everlasting life !
Yet oft that darkening sky is rife
With thunder-bearing clouds ! they fade—
And heaven's blue depths again display'd
Seem steep'd in quiet more profound !
—I walk'd unto the burial-ground,
Where that delightful Child doth rest—
There both her Parents deeply blest !
Methought I saw their souls rejoice,
Listening in heaven that Seraph's voice.

LINES

WRITTEN AT A LITTLE WELL BY THE ROADSIDE,
LANGDALE.

THOU lonely spring of waters undefiled !
 Silently slumbering in thy mossy cell,
 Yea, moveless as the hillock's verdant side
 From which thou hadst thy birth, I bless thy gleam
 Of clearest coldness, with as deep-felt joy
 As pilgrim kneeling at his far-sought shrine ;
 And as I bow to bathe my freshen'd heart
 In thy restoring radiance, from my lips
 A breathing prayer sheds o'er thy glassy sleep
 A gentle tremor !

Nor must I forget

A benison for the departed soul
 Of him, who, many a year ago, first shaped

This little Font,—imprisoning the spring
Not wishing to be free, with smooth slate-stone,
Now in the beauteous colouring of age
Scarcely distinguished from the natural rock.
In blessed hour the solitary man
Laid the first stone,—and in his native vale
It serves him for a peaceful monument,
'Mid the hill silence.

■

Renovated life

Now flows through all my veins :—old dreams revive ;
And while an airy pleasure in my brain
Dances unbidden, I have time to gaze,
Even with a happy lover's kindest looks,
On Thee, delicious Fountain !

Thou dost shed

(Though sultry stillness fill the summer air
And parch the yellow hills,) all round thy cave,
A smile of beauty lovely as the Spring
Breathes with his April showers. The narrow lane
On either hand ridged with low shelving rocks,
That from the road-side gently lead the eye
Up to thy bed,—Ah me ! how rich a green,
Still brightening, wantons o'er its moisten'd grass !
With what a sweet sensation doth my gaze,

Now that my thirsty soul is gratified,
Live on the little cell ! The water there,
Variously dappled by the wreathed sand
That sleeps below in many an antic shape,
Like the mild plumage of the pheasant-hen
Soothes the beholder's eye. The ceaseless drip
From the moss-fretted roof, by Nature's hand
Vaulted most beautiful, even like a pulse
Tells of the living principle within,—
A pulse but seldom heard amid the wild.

Yea, seldom heard : there is but one lone cot
Beyond this well :—it is inhabited
By an old shepherd during summer months,
And haply he may drink of the pure spring,
To Langdale Chapel on the Sabbath-morn
Going to pray,—or as he home returns
At silent eve : or traveller such as I,
Following his fancies o'er these lonely hills,
Thankfully here may slake his burning thirst
Once in a season. Other visitants
It hath not ; save perchance the mountain-crow,
When ice hath lock'd the rills, or wandering colt
Leaving its pasture for the shady lane.

Methinks, in such a solitary cave,
The fairy forms belated peasant sees,

Of nightly dancing in a glittering ring
On the smooth mountain sward, might here retire
To lead their noon-tide revels, or to bathe
Their tiny limbs in this transparent well.
A fitter spot there is not : flowers are here
Of loveliest colours and of sweetest smell,
Native to these our hills, and ever seen
A fairest family by the happy side
Of their own parent spring ;—and others too,
Of foreign birth, the cultured garden's joy,
Planted by that old shepherd in his mirth,
Here smile like strangers in a novel scene.
Lo ! a tall rose-tree with its clustering bloom,
Brightening the mossy wall on which it leans
Its arching beauty, to my gladsome heart
Seems, with its smiles of lonely loveliness,
Like some fair virgin at the humble door
Of her dear mountain-cot, standing to greet
The way-bewildered traveller.

But my soul
Long pleased to linger by this silent cave,
Nursing its wild and playful fantasies,
Pants for a loftier pleasure,—and forsakes,
Though surely with no cold ingratitude,
The flowers and verdure round the sparkling well.

A voice calls on me from the mountain-depths,
And it must be obey'd : Yon ledge of rocks,
Like a wild staircase over Hardknot's brow,
Is ready for my footsteps, and even now,
Wastwater blackens far beneath my feet,
She the storm-loving Lake.

Sweet Fount !—Farewell !

THE PAST.

How wild and dim this Life appears !
One long, deep, heavy sigh !
When o'er our eyes, half-clos'd in tears,
The images of former years
Are faintly glimmering by !
And still forgotten while they go,
As on the sea-beach wave on wave
Dissolves at once in snow.
Upon the blue and silent sky
The amber clouds one moment lie,
And like a dream are gone !
Though beautiful the moon-beams play
On the lake's bosom bright as they,
And the soul intensely loves the ir stay,
Soon as the radiance melts away
We scarce believe it shone !

Heaven-airs amid the harp-strings dwell,
And we wish they ne'er may fade—
They cease! and the soul is a silent cell,
Where music never played.
Dream follows dream through the long night-hours,
Each lovelier than the last—
But ere the breath of morning-flowers,
That gorgeous world flies past.
And many a sweet angelic cheek,
Whose smiles of love and kindness speak,
Glides by us on this earth—
While in a day we cannot tell
Where shone the face we loved so well
In sadness or in mirth.

P E A C E.

I COULD believe that sorrow ne'er sojourned
 Within the circle of these sunny hills.
 That this small Lake, beneath the morning light,
 Now lying so serenely beautiful,
 Ne'er felt one passing storm, but on its breast
 Retained for aye the silent imagery
 Of those untroubled heavens.

How still yon Isle,
 Scarcely distinguished from its glimmering shadow
 ' In the water pure as air ! Yon little Flock
 How snow-white ! lying on the pastoral mount,
 Basking in the sunshine. That lone Fisherman,
 Who draws his net so slowly to the shore,
 How calm an Image of secluded Life !

While the boat moving with its twinkling oars,
On its short voyage to yon verdant point
Fringed with wild birch-wood, leaves a shining track
Connecting by a pure and silvery line
The quiet of both shores.

So deep the calm

I hear the solitary Stock-dove's voice
Moaning across the Lake, from the dark bosom
Of yon old Pine-Grove. Hark the village clock
Tolls soberly ! And, 'mid the tufted Elms,
Reveals the spire still pointing up to Heaven.
I travel on unto the noisy City,
And on this sunny bank mine hour of rest
Stream-like has murmured by—yet shall the music
Oft rise again—the Lake, Hills, Wood, and Grove,
And that calm House of God. Sweet Vale, Fare-
well !

THE
DESOLATE VILLAGE.

FIRST DREAM.

SWEET Village ! on thy pastoral hill
Arrayed in sunlight sad and still,
As if beneath the harvest-moon,
Thy noiseless homes were sleeping !
It is the merry month of June,
And creatures all of air and earth
Should now their holiday of mirth
With dance and song be keeping.
But, loveliest Village ! silent Thou,
As cloud wreathed o'er the Morning's brow,
When light is faintly breaking,
And Midnight's voice afar is lost,
Like the wailing of a wearied ghost,
The shades of earth forsaking.

'Tis not the Day to Scotia dear,
A summer Sabbath mild and clear !
Yet from her solemn burial-ground
The small Kirk-Steeple looks around,
Enshrouded in a calm
Profound as fills the house of prayer,
E'er from the band of virgins fair
Exhales the choral psalm.
A sight so steeped in perfect rest
Is slumbering not on nature's breast
In the smiles of earthly day !
'Tis a picture floating down the sky,
By fancy framed in years gone by,
And mellowing in decay !
That thought is gone !—the Village still
With deepening quiet crowns the hill,
Its low green roofs are there !
In soft material beauty beaming,
As in the silent hour of dreaming
They hung embowered in air !

Is this the Day when to the mountains
The happy shepherds go,
And bathe in sparkling pools and fountains
Their flocks made white as snow ?

Hath gentle girl and gamesome boy,
With meek-eyed mirth or shouting joy,
Gone tripping up the brae ?
Till far behind their Town doth stand,
Like an image in sweet Fairy Land,
When the Elves have flown away :
—O sure if aught of human breath
Within these walls remain,
Thus deepening in the hush of death,
'Tis but some melancholy Crone,
Who sits with solemn eyes
Beside the cradle all alone,
And lulls the infant with a strain
Of Scotia's ancient melodies.

What if these homes be filled with life ?
'Tis the sultry month of June,
And when the cloudless sun rides high
Above the glittering air of noon,
All nature sinks opprest,—
And labour shuts his weary eye
In the mid-day hour of rest.
Yet let the soul think what it will,
Most dirge-like mourns that moorland rill !
How different once its flow !

When with a dreamy motion gliding
'Mid its green fields in love abiding,
Or leaping o'er the mossy linn,
And sporting with its own wild din,
Seemed water changed to snow.
Beauty lies spread before my sight,
But grief-like shadows dim its light,
And all the scene appears
Like a church-yard when a friend is dying,
In more than earthly stillness lying,
And glimmering through our tears !

Sweet Woodburn ! like a cloud that name
Comes floating o'er my soul !
Although thy beauty still survive,
One look hath changed the whole.
The gayest village of the gay
Beside thy own sweet river,
Wert Thou on Week or Sabbath day !
So bathed in the blue light of joy,
As if no trouble could destroy
Peace doomed to last for ever.
Now in the shadow of thy trees
Still lovely in the tainted breeze,
The fell Plague-Spirit grimly lies
And broods, as in despite

Of uncomplaining lifelessness,
On the troops of silent shades that press
Into the church-yard's cold recess,
From that region of delight.

Last summer from the school-house door,
When the glad play-bell was ringing,
What shoals of bright-haired elves would pour,
Like small waves racing on the shore,
In dance of rapture singing !
Oft by yon little silver well,
Now sleeping in neglected cell,
The village-maid would stand,
While resting on the mossy bank
With freshened soul the traveller drank
The cold cup from her hand ;
Haply some soldier from the war,
Who would remember long and far
That Lily of the Land.
And still the green is bright with flowers,
And dancing through the sunny hours,
Like blossoms from enchanted bowers
On a sudden wafted by,
Obedient to the changeful air,
And proudly feeling they are fair,
Glide bird and butterfly.

But where is the tiny hunter-rout
That revelled on with dance and shout
Against their airy prey ?
Alas ! the fearless linnet sings,
And the bright insect folds its wings
Upon the dewy flower that springs
Above these children's clay.
And if to yon deserted well
Some solitary maid,
As she was wont at eve, should go—
There silent as her shade
She stands a while—then sad and slow
Walks home, afraid to think
Of many a loudly-laughing ring
That dipped their pitchers in that spring,
And lingered round its brink.

On—on—through woful images
My spirit holds her way !
Death in each drooping flower she sees :
And oft the momentary breeze
Is singing of decay.
—So high upon the slender bough
Why hangs the crow her nest ?
All undisturbed her young have lain
This spring-time in their nest ;

Nor as they flew on tender wing
E'er fear'd the cross-bow or the sling.
Tame as the purpling turtle-dove,
That walks serene in human love,
The magpie hops from door to door ;
And the hare, not fearing to be seen,
Doth gambol on the village green
As on the lonely moor.
The few sheep wandering by the brook
Have all a dim neglected look,
Oft bleating in their dumb distress
On her their sweet dead shepherdess.
The horses pasturing through the range
Of gateless fields, all common now,
Free from the yoke enjoy the change,
To them a long long Sabbath-sleep !
Then gathering in one thunderous band,
Across the wild they sweep,
Tossing the long hair from their eyes—
Till far the living whirlwind flies
As o'er the desert sand.
From human let their course is free—
No lonely angler down the lea
Invites the zephyr's breath—
And the beggar far away doth roam,
Preferring in his hovel-home
His penury to death.

On that green hedge a scattered row
Now weather-stained—once white as snow—
Of garments that have long been spread,
And now belong unto the dead,
Shroud-like proclaim to every eye,
“This is no place for charity !”

O blest are ye ! unthinking creatures !
Rejoicing in your lowly natures
Ye dance round human tombs !
Where gladlier sings the mountain lark ,
Than o'er the church-yard dim and dark !
Or where, than on the church-yard wall,
From the wild rose-tree brighter fall
Her transitory blooms !
What is it to that lovely sky
If all her worshippers should die !
As happily her splendours play
On the grave where human forms decay,
As o'er the dewy turf of Morn,
Where the virgin, like a woodland Fay
On wings of joy was borne.
—Even now a soft and silvery haze
Hill—Village—Tree—is steeping
In the loveliness of happier days,
Ere rose the voice of weeping !

When incense-fires from every hearth
To heaven stole beautiful from earth.

Sweet Spire ! that crown'st the house of God !
To thee my spirit turns,
While through a cloud the softened light
On thy yellow dial burns.
Ah, me ! my bosom inly bleeds
To see the deep-worn path that leads
Unto that open gate !
In silent blackness it doth tell
How oft thy little sullen bell
Hath o'er the village toll'd its knell,
In beauty desolate.
Oft, wandering by myself at night,
Such spire hath risen in softened light
Before my gladdened eyes,—
And as I looked around to see
The village sleeping quietly
Beneath the quiet skies,—
Methought that 'mid her stars so bright,
The moon in placid mirth,
Was not in heaven a holier sight
Than God's house on the earth.
Sweet image ! transient in my soul !
That very bell hath ceased to toll

When the grave receives its dead—
And the last time it slowly swung,
'Twas by a dying stripling rung
O'er the sexton's hoary head !
All silent now from cot or hall
Comes forth the sable funeral !
The Pastor is not there !
For yon sweet Manse now empty stands,
Nor in its walls will holier hands
Be e'er held up in prayer.

THE
DESOLATE VILLAGE.

SECOND DREAM.

BESSY BELL AND MARY GRAY.

O HUSH'D be our souls as this Burial-ground !
 And let our feet without a sound
 Glide o'er the mournful clay ;
 For lo ! two radiant Creatures flitting
 O'er the grave-stones ! now moveless sitting
 On a low funeral mound ! 'Tis day !
 And, but that ghosts where'er they rove
 Do in their breathless beauty love
 The cold, the wan, and the silent light
 O'er the Church-yard shed by the Queen of Night,
 Sure Sister-Shades were They !
 —Of many 'tis the holy faith,
 E'er from the dying frame

Departs the latest lingering breath,
Its earthly garb the same,
A shadowy Likeness still doth come,
A noiseless, pale-faced, beckoning Wraith
To call the Stranger home !
Or, are ye Angels ! who from bliss,
With dewy fall, unto our earth
On wings of Paradise descend,
The grave of Innocence to kiss,
And tears of an immortal birth
With human tears to blend !
Aye ! there they sit ! like earthly Creatures
With softer, sadder, fainter features !
A Halo round each head ;
Fair Things whose earthly course is o'er,
And who bring from some far-distant shore
The beauty that on earth they wore,
With the silence of the dead.

The dream of Ghost and Angel fades,
And I gaze upon two Orphan-Maids,
Frail Creatures, doom'd to die !
Spirits may be fair in their heavenly sleep,
But sure when mortal Beings wæp
In tears a beauty lies more deep,
The glimmering of mortality !

Their aged Friend in slumber lies,
And hath closed for an hour the only eyes
That ever cheered their orphan-state,
At the hour of birth left desolate !
She sleeps ! and now these Maids have come
With mournful hearts to this mournful home,
Led here by a pensive train
Of thoughts still brooding on the dead !
For they have watched the breast of Pain
Till it moved not on its bed,
The lifeless lips together prest,
And many a ghastly body drest,
And framed the shroud for the corse of bone
That lay unheeded and alone,
When all its friends were dead and gone !

So they walk not to yon breezy mountain
To sit in the shade of its silvery fountain,
And 'mid that lofty air serene
Forget the dim and wailing scene
That spreads beneath their feet !
They walk not down yon fairy stream
Whose liquid lapses sweet
Might wrap them in some happy dream
Of a pure, calm, far retreat,

As on that rivulet seems to flow,
Escaping from a world of Wo !
But this still realm is their delight,
And hither they repair
Communion with the Dead to hold !
Peaceful, as at the fall of night,
Two little Lambkins gliding white
Return unto the gentle air
That sleeps within the Fold.
Or like two Birds to their lonely nest,
Or wearied waves to their bay of rest,
Or fleecy clouds, when their race is run,
That hang, in their own beauty blest,
'Mid the calm that sanctifies the west
Around the setting Sun.

Phantoms ! ye waken to mine eye
Sweet trains of earthly imagery !
Whate'er on Nature's breast is found
In loveliness without a sound,
That silent seems to soul and sense,
Emblem of perfect Innocence !
Two radiant dew-drops that repose
On mossy bank at Evening's close,
And happy in the gentle weather,
In beauty disappear together !

Two flowers upon the lonesome moor,
When a dim day of storm is o'er,
Lifting up their yellow hair
To meet the balm of the slumbering air.
Two Sea-birds from the troubled ocean
Floating with a snowy motion,
In the absence of the gale
Over a sweet inland vale !
Two early-risen Stars that lie
Together on the Evening-sky,
And imperceptibly pursue
Their walk along the depths of blue.
—Sweet Beings ! on my dreams ye rise
With all your frail humanities !
Nor Earth below, nor Heaven above,
An image yields of Peace and Love,
So perfect as your pensive breath
That brings unsought a dream of death !
Each sigh more touching than the last,
Till Life's pathetic tune be past !

THE
DESOLATE VILLAGE.

THIRD DREAM.

THE DEPARTURE.

THE grave is fill'd and the turf is spread
To grow together o'er the dead.
The little daisies bright and fair
Are looking up scarce injured there,
And one warm night of summer-dew
Will all their wonted smiles renew,
Restoring to its blooming rest
A soft couch for the sky-lark's breast.
The funeral-party, one by one
Have given their blessing and are gone—
Prepared themselves ere long to die,
A small, sad, silent company.

The orphans robed in spotless white
Yet linger in the holy ground,
And shed all o'er that peaceful mound
A radiance like the wan moonlight.
—Then from their mother's grave they glide
Out of the church-yard side by side.
Just at the gate they pause and turn—
I hear sad blended voices mourn
“ Mother, farewell !” the last endeavour
To send their souls back to the clay.
Then they hide their eyes—and walk away
From her grave—now and for ever !

Not till this parting invocation
To their mother's buried breast,
Had they felt the power of desolation !
Long as she lived, the village lay
Calm—unrepining in decay—
For grief was its own consolation,
And death seem'd only rest.
—But now a dim and sullen breath
Hath character'd the face of death ;
And tears, and sighs, and sobs, and wailing,
All round—o'er human joy prevailing—
Or 'mid the pausing fits of woe,
Wild silence, like a depth of snow

Shrouding in slumber stern and dull
The spring-fields late so beautiful,
Upon their fainting spirits press
With weight of utter hopelessness,
And drive them off, they heed not where,
So that oblivion's ebbless wave
May lie for ever on one grave,
One village of despair.

Faint with such spectacles of woe
Towards their solitary home
Across the village-green they go—
Eyeing the streamlet's murmuring flow,
Where melt away the specks of foam,
Like human creatures dying
'Mid their voyage down life's peaceful stream,
Upon the bosom of a dream
In thoughtless pleasure lying.
Calm reveries of composing grief !
Whose very sadness yields relief
To heart, and soul, and eye.
The Orphans look around—and lo !
How touching is that Lilac's glow,
Beneath the tall Laburnum's bow
That dazzling spans the sky !

That golden gleam—that gentle fire
Forces even anguish to admire ;
And gently cheers away distress
By the power of nature's loveliness.
From many a little garden steal
Odours that have been wasting long
A sweetness there was none to feel ;
And from the hidden flowers a song
Of bees, in happy multitude
All busy in that solitude,
An image brings of all the strife
And gladness of superior life,
Till man seem, 'mid these insects blest,
A brother-insect hardly miss'd.

They seize that transient calm ; the door
Of their own cottage open stands—
Far lonelier than one hour before,
When they with weak and trembling hands
The head of that dear coffin bore
Unto its darksome bed !
To them far drearier than the tomb,
The naked silence of the room
Deserted by the dead.
They kiss the dim and senseless walls,
Then hurry fast away ;

Some sudden thought their feet recalls,
And trifles urge their stay,
Till with the violence of despair
They rush into the open air,
And bless its thatch and sheltering tree,
Then leave it everlastingly !

. —On, on they go, in sorrow blind,
Yet with a still and gentle motion
That speaks the inner soul resign'd ;
Like little billows o'er the ocean
Still flowing on with tide and wind,
And though the tempest smite their breast,
Reaching at last some bay of rest.

God bless them on their pilgrimage !
And may his hand divine
With healing dew their woes assuage,
When they have reach'd that silent shrine
By nature fram'd in the open air,
With soft turf for the knees of prayer,
And dome of many a pastoral hill
Lying in heaven serene and still ;
For, pilgrims ne'er to Sion went
More mournful, or more innocent,
Before the rueful Cross to lie
At midnight on Mount Calvary.

Two favourite sheep before them go—
Each with its lambs of spotless snow
Frisking around with pattering feet,
With peaceful eyes and happy bleat.
Happy ! yet like a soft` complaint !
As if at times the voice of sorrow
Through the hush'd air came breathing faint
From blessed things that fear no morrow.
—Each Shepherdess holds in her hand
A verdant crook of the willow-wand,
Wreath'd round with melancholy flowers
Gather'd 'mid the hills in happier hours.
In a small cage a thrush is sitting—
Or restless as the light
That through his sunny prison plays,
From perch to perch each moment flitting,
His quick and glancing eye surveys
The novel trees and fields so bright,
And like a torrent gushing strong
He sends through heaven his sudden song,
A song that all dim thought destroys,
And breathes o'er all its own wild joys.

As on the Orphans hold their way
Through the stillness of the dying day,
Fairies might they seem who are returning,

At the end of some allotted time,
Unto their own immortal clime !
Each bearing in its lovely hand
Some small memorial of the land
Where they, like common human frames,
And call'd by gentle Christian names,
For long had been sojourning !
Some little fair insensate thing,
Relic of that wild visiting !
Bird that beneath a brighter spring
Of its own vanish'd earth will sing ;
Those harmless creatures that will glide
O'er faëry vales in earthly snow,
And from the faëry river's flow
Come forth more purely beautified.

Now with a wild and mournful song .
The fair procession moves along,
While, by that tune so sweet
The little flock delighted, press
As if with human tenderness
Around the singer's feet.
Up—up the gentle slope they wind,
Leaving the laughing flowers behind
That seem to court their stay.

One moment on the top they stand,
At the wild-unfolding vale's command,
—Then down into that faëry land
Dream-like they sink away !

LINES

WRITTEN ON SEEING A PICTURE BY BERGHEM,
OF AN ASS IN A STORM-SHOWER.

Poor wretch ! that blasted leafless tree,
More frail and death-like even than thee,
Can yield no shelter to thy shivering form ;
The sleet, the rain, the wind of Heaven
Full in thy face are coldly driven,
As if thou wert alone the object of the storm.

Yet chill'd with cold, and drench'd with rain,
Mild creature ! thou dost not complain
By sound or look of these ungracious skies ;
Calmly as if in friendly shed,
There stand'st thou, with unmoving head,
And a grave, patient meekness in thy half-closed
eyes.

Long could my thoughtful spirit gaze
On thee ; nor am I loth to praise
Him who in moral mood this image drew ;
And yet, methinks, that I could frame
An image different, yet the same,
More pleasing to the heart, and yet to Nature true.

Behold a lane retired and green,
Winding amid a forest-scene
With blooming furze in many a radiant heap ;
There is a browsing Ass espied,
One colt is frisking by her side,
And one among her feet is safely stretch'd in sleep.

And lo ! a little maiden stands,
With thistles in her tender hands,
Tempting with kindly words the colt to eat ;
Or gently down before him lays,
With words of solace and of praise,
Pluck'd from th' untrodden turf the herbage soft
and sweet.

The summer sun is sinking down,
And the peasants from the market town
With cheerful hearts are to their homes returning ;

Groupes of gay children too are there,
Stirring with mirth the silent air,
O'er all their eager eyes the light of laughter burn-
ing.

The Ass hath got his burthen still !
The merry elves the panniers fill ;
Delighted there from side to side they swing :
The creature heeds nor shout nor call,
But jogs on careless of them all,
Whether in harmless sport they gaily strike or sing.

A gipsy-groupe ! the secret wood
Stirs through its leafy solitude,
As wheels the dance to many a jocund tune ;
Th' unpannier'd Ass slowly retires
From the brown tents, and sparkling fires,
And silently feeds on beneath the silent moon.

The Moon sits o'er the huge oak tree,
More pensive 'mid this scene of glee
That mocks the hour of beauty and of rest ;
The soul of all her softest rays
On yonder placid creature plays,
As if she wish'd to cheer the hardships of the op-
prest.

But now the silver moonbeams fade,
And, peeping through a flowery glade,
Hush'd as a wild-bird's nest, a cottage lies :
An Ass stands meek and patient there,
And by her side a spectre fair,
To drink the balmy cup once more before she dies.

With tenderest care the pitying dame
Supports the dying maiden's frame,
And strives with laughing looks her heart to cheer ;
While playful children crowd around
To catch her eye by smile or sound,
Unconscious of the doom that waits their lady dear !

I feel this mournful dream impart
A holier image to my heart,
For oft doth grief to thoughts sublime give birth :
Blest creature ! through the solemn night,
I see thee bath'd in heavenly light,
Shed from that wondrous child—The Saviour of the
Earth.

When flying Herod's murd'rous rage,
Thou on that wretched pilgrimage
Didst gently near the virgin-mother lie ;

On thee the humble Jesus sate,
When thousands rush'd to Salem's gate
To see 'mid holy hymns the sinless man pass by.

Happy thou wert, nor low thy praise,
In peaceful patriarchal days,
When countless tents slow passed from land to land
Like clouds o'er heaven: the gentle race
Such quiet scene did meetly grace,
Circling the pastoral camp in many a stately band.

Poor wretch ! my musing dream is o'er ;
Thy shivering form I view once more,
And all the pains thy race is doom'd to prove ;
But they whose thoughtful spirits see
The truth of life, will pause with me,
And bless thee in a voice of gentleness and love !

PRAYER TO SLEEP.

O GENTLE Sleep ! wilt Thou lay thy head
For one little hour on thy Lover's bed,
And none but the silent stars of night
Shall witness be to our delight !

Alas ! 'tis said that the Couch must be
Of the Eider-down that is spread for Thee,
So, I in my sorrow must lie alone,
For mine, sweet Sleep ! is a Couch of stone.

Music to Thee I know is dear ;
Then, the saddest of music is ever here,
For Grief sits with me in my cell,
And she is a Syren who singeth well.

But Thou, glad Sleep ! lov'st gladsome airs,
And wilt only come to thy Lover's prayers

When the bells of merriment are ringing,
And bliss with liquid voice is singing.

Fair Sleep ! so long in thy beauty wooed,
No Rival hast Thou in my solitude ;
Be mine, my Love ! and we two will lie
Embraced for ever—or awake to die !

Dear Sleep ! farewell !—hour, hour, hour, hour,
Will slowly bring on the gleam of Morrow,
But Thou art Joy's faithful Paramour,
And lie wilt Thou not in the arms of Sorrow.

ON READING

MR CLARKSON'S HISTORY OF THE ABOLITION OF
THE SLAVE TRADE.

'MID the august and never-dying light
Of constellated spirits, who have gain'd
A throne in heaven, by power of heavenly acts,
And leave their names immortal and unchanged
On earth, even as the names of Sun and Moon,
See'st thou, my soul ! 'mid all that radiant host
One worthier of thy love and reverence,
Than He, the fearless spirit who went forth,
Mgild in the armour of invincible faith,
And bearing in his grasp the spear of truth,
Fit to destroy or save,—went forth to wage,
Against the fierce array of bloody men,
Avarice and ignorance, cruelty and hate,
A holy warfare ! Deep within his soul,

The groans of anguish, and the clank of chains,
 Dwelt ceaseless as a cataract, and fill'd
 The secret haunts of meditative prayer.
 Encircled by the silence of the hearth,
 The evening-silence of a happy home ;
 Upon his midnight bed, when working soul
 Turns inward, and the steady flow of thought
 Is all we feel of life ; in crowded rooms,
 Where mere sensation oft takes place of mind,
 And all time seems the present ; in the sun,
 The joyful splendour of a summer-day ;
 Or 'neath the moon, the calm and gentle night ;
 Where'er he moved, one vision ever fill'd
 His restless spirit. 'Twas a vision bright
 With colours born in Heaven, yet oh ! bedimm'd
 With breath of sorrow, sighs, and tears, and blood !
 Before him lay a quarter of the world,
 A Mighty Land, wash'd by unnumber'd floods,
 Born in her bosom,—floods that to the sea
 Roll ocean-like, or in the central wilds
 Fade like the dim day melting into night ;
 A land all teeming with the gorgeous shew
 Of Nature in profuse magnificence !
 Vallies and groves, where untamed herds have ranged
 Without a master since the birth of time !
 Fountains and caves fill'd with the hidden light

Of diamond and of ruby, only view'd
 With admiration by the unenvying sun !
 Millions of beings like himself he sees
 In stature and in soul,—the sons of God,
 Destined to do him homage, and to lift
 Their fearless brows unto the burning sky,
 Stamp'd with his holy image ! Noble shapes,
 Kings of the desert, men whose stately tread
 Brings from the dust the sound of liberty !
 The vision fades not here ; he sees the gloom
 That lies upon these kingdoms of the sun,
 And makes them darker than the dreary realms,
 Scarce-moving at the pole. A sluggish flow
 Attends those floods so great and beautiful,
 Rolling in majesty that none adores !
 And lo ! the faces of those stately men,
 Silent as death, or changed to ghastly shapes
 By madness and despair ! His ears are torn
 By shrieks and ravings, loud, and long, and wild,
 Or the deep-mutter'd curse of sullen hearts,
 Scorning in bitter woe their gnawing chains !
 He sees, and shuddering feels the vision true,
 A pale-faced band, who in his mother-isle
 First look'd upon the day, beneath its light
 Dare to be tyrants, and with coward deeds
 Sully the glory of the Queen of Waves !

He sees that famous Isle, whose very winds
 Dissolve like icicles the tyrant's chains,
 On Afric bind them firm as adamant,
 Yet boast, with false and hollow gratitude,
 Of all the troubled nations of the earth
 That she alone is free ! The awful sight
 Appals not him ; he draws his lonely breath
 Without a tremor ; for a voice is heard
 Breathed by no human lips,—heard by his soul,—
 That he by Heaven is chosen to restore
 Mercy on earth, a mighty conqueror
 Over the sins and miseries of man.
 The work is done ! the Niger's sullen waves
 Have heard the tidings,—and the orient Sun
 Beholds them rolling on to meet his light
 In joyful beauty.—Tombût's spiry towers
 Are bright without the brightness of the day,
 And Houssa wakening from his age-long trance
 Of woe, amid the desert, smiles to hear
 The last faint echo of the blissful sound.—

LINES

WRITTEN ON OAK ISLAND, KILLARNEY.

FAR in the heart of Island-solitude
 Our Tent was pitched, beneath a Grove of Oaks.
 A scene more solemn never Hermit chose
 For penitence and prayer ; nor pensive Bard
 Wept over, dreaming of his dying hour
 And the happy stillness of a sylvan grave.
 That ancient wood was breathless as a Tomb,
 Save when the Stockdove in his central haunt
 Awakening suddenly a loud deep song,
 Startled the silence, ev'n as with a peal
 Of faint and far-off Thunder. From the door
 Of our lone Tent, thus wildly-canopied,
 Down to the Lake-side, gently sloped a Bank,
 Like the heaved bosom of the sea-green wave ;
 Where the pure waters of a crescent Bay
 Kiss'd with a murmuring joy the fragrant heath,

Impurpled with its bloom. On either side,
As emulous of that refulgent Bank,
Hills brightly-girdled with green arbutus-groves
Rose up to Heaven ; yet bowed their lofty heads
In homage to that Mountain * where the Bird
Of Jove abides. Right in the front he spread
His Cliffs, his Caverns, and his streamy Glens,
Flinging an air of wild sublimity
O'er Beauty's quiet home ! Yet, not exiled
Was that fair spirit from the home she lov'd.
Her sweet smile trembled on the o'ershadow'd wave
Even at the mountain's foot ; like dew it lay
On the relenting sternness of the Rocks ;
The black and sullen entrances of Caves
Dropp'd wild-flowers at her bidding ; ere it reach'd
Her ear, the tumult of the Cataract
Was pleasant music ; but her perfect bliss
Came from the clear blue sky, and from the clouds
That seemed eternal in their depth of rest.

I closed mine eye, that undisturbed by sense
Of outward objects, I might gaze and gaze
On that transcendant landscape, as it lay
Dreamily imaged in my happy soul.

* Eagle-mountain.

But all seemed wavering as the restless Sea,
 Or the white morning-mist. Soon darkness veiled
 The far-withdrawing Vision, and a blank
 Like blindness or decay of memory
 Brooded where all those glorious things had shone.

Up started Fancy from her dreamless sleep !
 For lo ! the loveliest of all earthly Lakes
 (And let me breathe thy name so beautiful,
 Winander !) lay before me, in the light
 Of the sweet Harvest-moon. She, gracious Queen,
 Hung motionless above the liquid vale,
 To her as dear as her own native Heaven !
 The cliffs that tower round that romantic shore
 Seem'd jealous of her love, and gave their breasts
 To meet her tender smiles : each shaded Bay,
 Bright with the image of its guardian Star,
 To catch one glimpse seem'd opening its fair trees ;
 Delighting in her mild and placid eye
 The whispering Islands softly hymn'd her praise :
 Gladly had all the Woods revealed their depths
 To the Spirit glimmering on their topmost boughs ;
 And the far Mountains that by day appear
 So stern and frowning, by her power subdued,
 Flung down their mighty bulks into repose
 Like Genii by enchantment lulled asleep !

Then, as if wafted on an Angel's wing,
~~Wondering~~ I found myself beneath the shade
Of my own Sycamore, that from its heart
Did sing a mournful and pathetic strain,
Gladsome withal ! a strain that lowly breathed
“ Welcome, O Wanderer ! welcome to thy Home ! ”
A light was in my Cottage—I beheld
A shadow move across it—then I heard
A soft step gently stealing through the gloom.
Long was the silence that enchained our souls !
For by his own sweet Fire, a Husband sat
Once more ! sat gazing on his first-born Child,
Who on his sinless Mother's happy breast
An emblem seemed of Innocence in Heaven !

THE
FALLEN OAK,
 A VISION.

SCENE, A WOOD, NEAR KESWICK, BELONGING TO
 GREENWICH HOSPITAL.

I.

BENEATH the shadow of an ancient oak,
 Dreaming I lay, far 'mid a solemn wood,
 When a noise like thunder stirr'd the solitude,
 And from that trance I suddenly awoke !
 A noble tree came crashing to the ground,
 Through the dark forest opening out a glade ;
 While all its hundred branches stretching round,
 Crush'd the tall hazles in its ample shade.
 Methought, the vanquished monarch as he died
 Utter'd a groan : while loud and taunting cheers

The woodmen raised o'er him whose stubborn pride
Had braved the seasons for an hundred years.
It seem'd a savage shout, a senseless scorn,
Nor long prevail'd amid the awful gloom ;
Sad look'd the forest of her glory shorn,
Reverend with age, yet bright in vigour's bloom,
Sláin in his hour of strength, a giant in his tomb.

II.

I closed mine eyes, nor could I brook to gaze
On the wild havoc in one moment done ;
Hateful to me shone forth the blessed sun,
As through the new form'd void he pour'd his rays.
Then rose a dream before my sleeping soul !
A wood-nymph tearing her dishevell'd hair,
And wailing loud, from a long vista stole,
And eyed the ruin with a fixed despair.
The velvet moss, that bath'd its roots in green,
For many a happy day had been her seat ;
Than valley wide more dear this secret scene ;
—She asked no music but the rustling sweet
Of the rejoicing leaves ; now, all is gone,
That touch'd the Dryad's heart with pure delight.
Soon shall the axe destroy her fallen throne,
Its leaves of gold, its bark so glossy bright—
—But now she hastes away,—death-sickening at the
sight !

III.

A nobler shape supplied the Dryad's place ;
Soon as I saw the spirit in her eye,
I knew the mountain-goddess, Liberty,
And in adoring reverence veil'd my face.
Smiling she stood beside the prostrate oak,
While a stern pleasure swell'd her lofty breast,
And thus, methought, in thrilling accents spoke—
“ Not long, my darling Tree ! must be thy rest !
“ Glorious thou wert, when towering through the
 skies
“ In winter-storms, or summer's balmy breath ;
“ And thou, my Tree ! shalt gloriously arise,
“ In life majestic, terrible in death !
“ For thou shalt float above the roaring wave,
“ Where flags denouncing battle stream afar ;—
“ Thou wert, from birth, devoted to the brave,
“ And thou shalt sail on like a blazing star,
“ Bearing victorious NELSON through the storms of
 war !”

NATURE OUTRAGED.

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

TO ROBERT SYM, ESQ. EDINBURGH.



ONCE, on the very gentlest stillest day
 That ever Spring did in her gladness breathe
 O'er this delightful earth, I left my home
 With a beloved friend, who ne'er before
 Had been among these mountains,—but whose heart,
 Led by the famous poets, through the air
 Serene of Nature oft had voyaged,
 On fancy's wing, and in her magic bowers
 Reposed, by wildest music sung to sleep:—
 So that, enamour'd of the imaged forms
 Of beauty in his soul, with holiest zeal
 He longed to hail the fair original,
 And do her spiritual homage.

That his love
Might, consonant to Nature's dictate wise,
From quiet impulse grow, and to the power
Of meditation and connecting thought,
Rather than startling glories of the eye,
Owe its enthronement in his inmost heart,
I led him to behold a little lake,
Which I so often in my lonely walks
Had visited, but never yet had seen
One human being on its banks, that I
Thought it mine own almost, so thither took
My friend, assured he could not chuse but love
A scene so loved by me !

Before we reached
The dell wherein this little lake doth sleep,
Into involuntary praise of all
Its pensive loveliness, my happy heart
Would frequent burst, and from those lyric songs,
That, sweetly warbling round the pastoral banks
Of Grassmere, on its silver waves have shed
The undying sunshine of a poet's soul,
I breathed such touching strains as suited well
The mild spring-day, and that secluded scene,
Towards which, in full assurance of delight,
We two then walked in peace.

On the green slope
Of a romantic glade, we sat us down,
Amid the fragrance of the yellow broom,
While o'er our heads the weeping birch-tree stream'd
Its branches arching like a fountain-shower,
Then look'd towards the lake,—with hearts prepared
For the warm reception of all lovely forms
Enrobed in loveliest radiance, such as oft
Had steep'd my spirit in a holy calm,
And made it by the touch of purest joy
Still as an infant's dream.

But where had fled
The paradise beloved in former days !
I look'd upon the countenance of my friend,
Who, lost in strange and sorrowful surprise,
Could scarce forbear to smile. Is this, he cried,
The lone retreat, where from the secret top
Of Helicon, the wild-eyed muse descends
To bless thy slumbers ? this the virgin scene
Where beauty smiles in undisturbed peace ?

I look'd again : but ne'er did lover gaze,
At last returning from some foreign clime,
With more affectionate sorrow on the face
That he left fair in youth, than I did gaze

On the alter'd features of my darling vale,
That, 'mid the barbarous outrages of art,
Retained, I ween, a heavenly character
That nothing could destroy. Yet much was lost
Of its original brightness: Much was there,
Marring the spirit I remembered once
Perfectly beautiful. The meadow field,
That with its rich and placid verdure lay
Even like a sister-lake, with nought to break
The smoothness of its bosom, save the swing
Of the hoar Canna, or, more snowy white,
The young lamb frisking in the joy of life,—
Oh! grief! a garden, all unlike, I ween,
To that where bloom'd the fair Hesperides,
Usurped the seat of Nature, while a wall
Of most bedazzling splendour, o'er whose height,
The little birds, content to flit along
From bush to bush, could never dare to fly,
Preserved from those who knew no ill intent,
Fruit-trees exotic, and flowers passing rare,
Less lovely far than many a one that bloom'd
Unnoticed in the woods.

And lo! a house,
An elegant villa! in the Grecian style!
Doubtless contrived by some great architect

Who had an Attic soul ; and in the shade
Of Academe or the Lyceum walk'd,
Forming conceptions fair and beautiful.
Blessed for ever be the sculptor's art !
It hath created guardian deities
To shield the holy building,—heathen gods
And goddesses, at which the peasant stares
With most perplexing wonder ; and light Fauns
That the good owner's unpoetic soul
Could not among the umbrage of the groves
Imagine, here, for ever in his sight,
In one unwearied posture frisk in stone.

My friend, quoth I, forgive these words of mine,
That haply seem more sportive than becomes
A soul that feels for Nature's sanctity
Thus blindly outraged ; but when evil work
Admits no remedy, we then are glad
Even from ourselves to hide, in mirth constrain'd,
An unavailing sorrow. Oh ! my friend,
Had'st thou beheld, as I, the glorious rock
By that audacious mansion hid for ever,
—Glorious I well might call it, with bright bands
Of flowers, and weeds as beautiful as flowers
Refulgent,—crown'd, as with a diadem,
With oaks that loved their birth-place, and alive

With the wild tones of echo, bird, and bee,—
Thou couldst have wept to think that paltry Art
Could so prevail o'er Nature, and weak man
Thus stand between thee and the works of God.
Well might the Naiad of that stream complain!
The glare of day hath driven her from her haunts,
Shady no more: The woodman's axe hath clear'd
The useless hazels where the linnet hung
Her secret nest; and yon hoar waterfall,
Whose misty spray rose through the freshen'd leaves
To heaven, like Nature's incense, and whose sound
Came deaden'd through the multitude of boughs
Like a wild anthem by some spirit sung,
Now looks as cheerless as the late-left snow
Upon the mountain's breast, and sends a voice,
From the bare rocks, of dreariness and woe!
See! farther down the streamlet, art hath framed
A delicate cascade! The channel stones
Hallow'd by rushing waters, and more green
Even than the thought of greenness in the soul,
Are gone; and pebbles, carefully arranged
By size and colour, at the bottom lie
Imprison'd; while a smooth and shaven lawn,
With graceful gravel walks most serpentine,
Surrounds the noisy wonder, and sends up

A smile of scorn unto the rocky fells,
Where, 'mid the rough fern, bleat the shelter'd sheep.

Oft hath the poet's eye on these wild fells
Beheld entrancing visions ;—but the cliffs,
In unscaled majesty, must frown no more ;
No more the coves profound draw down the soul
Into their stern dominion : even the clouds,
Floating or settling on the mountain's breast,
Must be adored no more :—far other forms
Delight his gaze, to whom, alas, belongs
This luckless vale !—On every eminence,
Smiles some gay image of the builder's soul,
Watch-tower or summer-house, where oft, at eve,
He meditates to go, with book in hand,
And read in solitude ; or weather-cock,
To tell which way the wind doth blow ; or fort,
Commanding every station in the vale
Where enemy might encamp, and from whose height
A gaudy flag might flutter, when he hears
With a true British pride of Frenchmen slain,
Ten thousand in one battle, lying grim
By the brave English, their dead conquerors !

Such was the spirit of the words I used
On witnessing such sacrilege. We turned

Homewards in silence, even as from the grave
Of one in early youth untimely dead,
And all that to my pensive friend I said
Upon our walk, were some few words of grief,
That thoughtlessness and folly, in one day,
Could render vain the mystic processes
Of Nature, working for a thousand years
The work of love and beauty ; so that Heaven
Might shed its gracious dew upon the earth,
Its sunshine and its rain, till living flowers
Rose up in myriads to attest its power,
But, in the midst of this glad jubilee, .
A blinded mortal come, and with a nod,
Thus rendering ignorance worse than wickedness,
Bid his base servants " tear from Nature's book
" A blissful leaf with worst impiety."

If thou, whose heart has listen'd to my song,
From Nature hold'st some fair inheritance
Like that whose mournful ruins I deplore,
Remember that thy birth-right doth impose
High duties on thee, that must be perform'd,
Else thou canst not be happy. 'Thou must watch
With holy zeal o'er Nature while she sleeps,
That nought may break her rest ; her waking smiles
Thou must preserve and worship ; and the gloom

That sometimes lies like night upon her face,
Creating awful thoughts, that gloom must hush
The beatings of thy heart, as if it lay
Like the dread shadow of eternity.

Beauteous thy home upon this beauteous earth,
And God hath given it to thee : therefore, learn
The laws by which the Eternal doth sublime
And sanctify his works, that thou mayest see
The hidden glory veiled from vulgar eyes,
And by the homage of enlighten'd love,
Repay the power that blest thee. Thou should'st
stand

Oft-times amid thy dwelling-place, with awe
Stronger than love, even like a pious man
Who in some great cathedral, while the chaunt
Of hymns is in his soul, no more beholds
The pillars rise august and beautiful,
Nor the dim grandeur of the roof that hangs
Far, far above his head, but only sees
The opening heaven-gates, and the white-robed bands
Of spirits prostrate in adoring praise.
So shalt thou to thy death-hour find a friend,
A gracious friend in Nature, and thy name,
As the rapt traveller through thy fair domains
Oft-lingering journeys, shall with gentle voice

Be breathed amid the solitude, and link'd
With those enlighten'd spirits that promote
The happiness of others by their own,
The consummation of all earthly joy.

MELROSE ABBEY.

It was not when the Sun through the glittering sky,
In summer's joyful majesty,
Look'd from his cloudless height ;—
It was not when the Sun was sinking down,
And tinging the ruin's mossy brown
With gleams of ruddy light ;—
Nor yet when the Moon, like a pilgrim fair,
'Mid star and planet journeyed slow,
And, mellowing the stillness of the air,
Smiled on the world below ;—
That, MELROSE ! 'mid thy mouldering pride,
All breathless and alone,
I grasped the dreams to day denied,
High dreams of ages gone !—
Had unshriev'd guilt for one moment been there,
His heart had turn'd to stone !

For oft, though felt no moving gale,
Like restless ghost in glimmering shroud,
Through lofty Oriel opening pale
Was seen the hurrying cloud ;
And, at doubtful distance, each broken wall
Frown'd black as bier's mysterious pall
From mountain-cave beheld by ghastly seer ;
It seem'd as if sound had ceased to be ;
Nor dust from arch, nor leaf from tree,
Relieved the noiseless ear.
The owl had sailed from her silent tower,
Tweed hush'd his weary wave,
The time was midnight's moonless hour,
My seat a dreaded Douglas' grave !

My being was sublimed by joy,
My heart was big, yet I could not weep ;
I felt that God would ne'er destroy
The mighty in their tranced sleep.
Within the pile no common dead
Lay blended with their kindred mould ;
Theirs were the hearts that pray'd, or bled,
In cloister dim, on death-plain red,
The pious and the bold.
There slept the saint whose holy strains
Brought seraphs round the dying bed ;

And there the warrior, who to chains
Ne'er stoop'd his crested head.
I felt my spirit sink or swell
With patriot rage or lowly fear,
As battle-trump, or convent-bell,
Rung in my tranced ear.
But dreams prevail'd of loftier mood,
When stern beneath the chancel high
My country's spectre-monarch stood,
All sheath'd in glittering panoply ;
Then I thought with pride what noble blood
Had flow'd for the hills of liberty.

High the resolves that fill the brain
With transports trembling upon pain,
When the veil of time is rent in twain,
That hides the glory past !
The scene may fade that gave them birth,
But they perish not with the perishing earth,
For ever shall they last.
And higher, I ween, is that mystic might
That comes to the soul from the silent night,
When she walks, like a disembodied spirit,
Through realms her sister shades inherit,
And soft as the breath of those blessed flowers
That smile in Heaven's unfading bowers,

With love and awe, a voice she hears
Murmuring assurance of immortal years.
In hours of loneliness and woe
Which even the best and wisest know,
How leaps the lighten'd heart to seize
On the bliss that comes with dreams like these !
As fair before the mental eye
The pomp and beauty of the dream return,
Dejected virtue calms her sigh,
And leans resign'd on memory's urn.
She feels how weak is mortal pain,
When each thought that starts to life again,
Tells that she hath not lived in vain.

For Solitude, by Wisdom woo'd,
Is ever mistress of delight,
And even in gloom or tumult view'd,
She sanctifies their living blood
Who learn her lore aright.
The dreams her awful face imparts,
Unhallowed mirth destroy ;
Her griefs bestow on noble hearts
A nobler power of joy.
While hope and faith the soul thus fill,
We smile at chance distress,
And drink the cup of human ill
In stately happiness.

'Thus even where death his empire keeps
Life holds the pageant vain,
And where the lofty spirit sleeps,
There lofty visions reign.
Yea, often to night-wandering man
A pow'r fate's dim decrees to scan,
In lonely trance by bliss is given ;
And midnight's starless silence rolls
A giant vigour through our souls,
That stamps us sons of Heaven.

Then, MELROSE ! Tomb of heroes old !
Blest be the hour I dwelt with thee ;
The visions that can ne'er be told
That only poets in their joy can see,
The glory borne above the sky
The deep-felt weight of sanctity !
Thy massy towers I view no more
Through brooding darkness rising hoar,
Like a broad line of light dim seen
Some sable mountain-cleft between !
Since that dread hour, hath human thought
A thousand gay creations brought
Before my earthly eye ;
I to the world have lent an ear,
Delighted all the while to hear
The voice of poor mortality.

Yet, not the less doth there abide
Deep in my soul a holy pride,
That knows by whom it was bestowed,
Lofty to man, but low to God ;
Such pride as hymning angels cherish,
Blest in the blaze where man would perish.

LINES

WRITTEN BY MOONLIGHT AT SEA.

AH me ! in dreams of struggling dread,
Let foolish tears no more be shed,
Tears wept on bended knee,
Though years of absence slowly roll
Between us and some darling soul
Who lives upon the sea !
Weep, weep not for the mariner,
Though distant far he roam,
And have no lovely resting-place
That he can call his home.
Friends hath he in the wilderness,
And with those friends he lives in bliss
Without one pining sigh !
The waves that round his vessel crowd,
The guiding star, the breezy cloud,
The music of the sky.

And, dearer even than Heaven's sweet light,
He gazes on that Wonder bright,
When sporting with the gales,
Or lying in a beauteous sleep
Above her shadow in the deep,
—The Ship in which he sails.
Then weep not for the mariner !
He needeth not thy tears ;
From his soul the Ocean's midnight voice
Dispels all mortal fears.
Quietly slumber shepherd-men
In the silence of some inland glen,
Lull'd by the gentlest sounds of air and earth ;
Yet as quietly rests the mariner,
Nor wants for dreams as melting fair
Amid the Ocean's mirth.

THE
NAMELESS STREAM.

GENTLE as dew, a summer shower
In beauty bathed tree, herb, and flower,
And told the stream to murmur on
With quicker dance and livelier tone.
The mist lay steady on the fell,
While lustre steeped each smiling dell,
Such wild and fairy contrast made
The magic power of light and shade.
Through trees a little bridge was seen,
Glittering with yellow, red, and green,
As o'er the moss with playful glide
The sunbeam danced from side to side,
And made the ancient arch to glow
Various as Heaven's reflected bow.
Within the dripping grove was heard
Rustle or song of joyful bird ;

The stir of rapture fill'd the air
From unseen myriads mingling there ;
Life lay entranced in sinless mirth,
And Nature's hymn swam o'er the earth !

In this sweet hour of peace and love,
I chanced from restless joy to move,
When by my side a being stood
Fairer than Naiad of the flood,
Or her who ruled the forest scene
In days of yore, the Huntress Queen.
Wildness, subdued by quiet grace,
Played o'er the vision's radiant face,
Radiant with spirit fit to steer
Her flight around the starry sphere,
Yet, willing to sink down in rest
Upon a guardian mortal breast.
Her eyes were rather soft than bright,
And, when a smile half-closed their light,
They seem'd amid the gleam divine
Like stars scarce seen through fair moonshine !
While ever, as with sportive air,
She lightly waved her clustering hair,
A thousand gleams the motion made,
Danced o'er the auburn's darker shade.

O MARY ! I had known thee long,
Amid the gay, the thoughtless throng,
Where mien leaves modesty behind,
And manner takes the place of mind ;
Where woman, though delightful still,
Quits Nature's ease for Fashion's skill,
Hides, by the gaudy gloss of art,
The simple beauty of her heart,
And, born to lift our souls to heaven,
Strives for the gaze despised when given,
Forgets her being's godlike power
To shine the wonder of an hour.
Oft had I sighed to think that thou,
An angel fair, couldst stoop so low ;
And as with light and airy pride,
'Mid worldly souls I saw thee glide,
Wasting those smiles that love with tears
Might live on all his blessed years,
Regret rose from thy causeless mirth,
That Heaven could thus be stain'd by Earth.

O vain regret ! I should have known,
Thy soul was strung to loftier tone,
That wisdom bade thee joyful range
Through worldly paths thou could'st not change,

And look with glad and sparkling eye
Even on life's cureless vanity.
—But now, thy being's inmost blood
Felt the deep power of solitude.
From Heaven a sudden glory broke,
And all thy angel soul awoke.
I hail'd the impulse from above,
And friendship was sublimed to love.
Fair are the vales that peaceful sleep
'Mid mountain-silence lone and deep,
Sweet narrow lines of fertile earth,
'Mid frowns of horror, smiles of mirth !
Fair too the fix'd and floating cloud,
The light obscure by eve bestowed,
The sky's blue stillness, and the breast
Of lakes, with all that stillness blest.
But dearer to my heart and eye,
Than valley, mountain, lake, or sky,
One Nameless Stream, whose happy flow
Blue as the heavens, or white as snow,
And gently-swelling sylvan side
By Mary's presence beautified,
Tell ever of expected years,
The wish that sighs, the bliss that fears,
Till taught at last no more to roam,
I worship the bright Star of Home.

ELEGY

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.

ERE Margaret was three months old,
Her Father laid her in the mould !
Poor Babe ! her fleeting visit here
Was mark'd by many a sigh and tear,
And sudden starts of unknown pain
Oft seem'd to shake her little brain !
Scarcely unto her ear was known
A yearning Mother's gentle tone ;
She could not by her smiles repay
The sleepless night, the anxious day ;
And yet, at times, her eyes would rest
With gladness on that Mother's breast,
And sinking, with a murmur there,
Like a hush'd stir of vernal air,
We saw her little bosom move
Blest by the genial fount of Love !

Gently the stroke of death did come,
And sent her to a heavenly home ;
Ev'n like the wild harp's transient strain,
She slept—and never woke again !
And now, beneath her spotless shroud,
Like a pale star behind a cloud,
Or a young Flower that dies in May,
Chill'd by hoar-frost—the Baby lay.
Ah, me ! it was a sad delight,
Through the dim stillness of the night,
While grief the glimmering air possest,
To mark her little bed of rest !
The sweet Child bore no looks of death,
She seem'd alive, though 'reft of breath ;
Her lips retained their sunny glow,
But her cold cheek was pale as snow !
While thus she lay, no painful trace
Broke the fair silence of her face ;
But something like a smile did play
Over the dead insensate clay,
As if a happy dream had shed
A halo round that guiltless head.

At morning light we took our way,
To drop the dear Babe in the clay.

No mourners might that corse attend,
Save Father—Servant—Neighbour—Friend ;
For none but real weepers gave
A blessing to mine Infant's grave.
The vernal noon was soft and mild,
Meet for the funeral of a child ;
Round the small grave the sunbeams stole,
Pure as the Infant's sainted soul !
And th' opening heavens appear'd to shed
A loving lustre o'er the dead.
The fair unfolding buds of Spring
Sustain'd our quiet sorrowing ;
For wide o'er the rejoicing Earth
Wild flowers were springing in their mirth,
Of many a bright and heavenly dye,
Emblems of sinless Infancy.
Oh ! fairer, sweeter far than they,
My Flower now dropt into the clay !
Shut by the sod roof, smooth and even,
Her blossoms from the dews of heaven !

When evening came, the silent hearth,
Two nights before alive with mirth,
With dim and languid lustre shone,
As if it knew our Babe was gone.

At once our spirits felt beguil'd
Of grief—we spake not of our child—
Yet every word we softly said,
Told that our thoughts were with the dead.
I look'd into the Mother's face,
And a calm smile had taken place
Of tears, by Jesu's self approved !
Our only Child, so much beloved,
Had left us for a cradle blest
Beyond a mortal mother's breast.—
We knew—we felt that God was kind—
What awful bliss to be resigned !

And is our Home a silent cell
Moved only by the passing-bell,
That on that May-day morning clear
All our kind Village wept to hear ?
No—it is filled from morn till night
With smiles, shouts, dances of delight,
And songs of nature's bursting glee,
And wild Elves' mimic minstrelsy ;
And rosy cheeks are sparkling there,
And orbs glide by of golden hair ;
And white arms wreathed in loving ring,
While Innocence is dallying

With that bright shape—her brother Joy !
—Who gave them may again destroy—
But dance along ye blythsome crew,
And I will join the pastime too ;
For whether on Life's mystic Tree
Fair Blossoms shine resplendently,
Or one chill blast of passing air
Hath swept its broken branches bare,
The tempests blow—the sunbeams shine,
Alike, from Mercy's awful Shrine.

ART AND NATURE.

SYLPH-LIKE, and with a graceful pride,
I saw the wild Louisa glide
Along the dance's glittering row,
With footsteps soft as falling snow.
On all around her smiles she pour'd,
And though by all admired, adored,
She seem'd to hold the homage light,
And careless claim'd it as her right.
With syren voice the Lady sung :
Love on her tones enraptured hung,
While timid awe and fond desire
Came blended from her witching lyre.
While thus, with unresisted art,
The Enchantress melted every heart,
Amid the glance, the sigh, the smile,
Herself, unmoved and cold the while,

With inward pity eyed the scene,
Where all were subjects—she a Queen !

Again, I saw that Lady fair :
Oh ! what a beauteous change was there !
In a sweet cottage of her own
She sat, and she was all alone,
Save a young child she sung to rest
On its soft bed, her fragrant breast.
With happy smiles and happy sighs,
She kiss'd the infant's closing eyes,
Then, o'er him in the cradle laid,
Moved her dear lips as if she pray'd.
She bless'd him in his father's name :
Lo ! to her side that father came,
And, in a voice subdued and mild,
He bless'd the mother and her child !
I thought upon the proud saloon,
And that Enchantress Queen ; but soon,
Far-off Art's fading pageant stole,
And Nature fill'd my thoughtful soul !

LINES

WRITTEN IN A HIGHLAND GLEN.

To whom belongs this Valley fair,
That sleeps beneath the filmy air,
Even like a living Thing ?
Silent,—as Infant at the breast,—
Save a still sound that speaks of rest,
That streamlet's murmuring !

The Heavens appear to love this vale ;
Here clouds with scarce-seen motion sail,
Or 'mid the silence lie !
By that blue arch, this beauteous Earth
Mid Evening's hour of dewy mirth
Seems bound unto the sky.

O ! that this lovely Vale were mine !
Then, from glad youth to calm decline,
My years would gently glide ;

Hope would rejoice in endless Dreams,
 And memory's oft-returning gleams
 By Peace be sanctified.

There would unto my soul be given,
 From presence of that gracious Heaven,
 A Piety sublime ;
 And thoughts would come of mystic mood,
 To make in this deep solitude
 Eternity of Time !

And did I ask to whom belonged
 This Vale ?—I feel that I have wronged
 Nature's most gracious soul !
 She spreads her glories o'er the Earth,
 And all her Children from their birth
 Are joint-heirs of the whole !

Yea ! long as Nature's humblest Child
 Hath kept her Temple undefiled
 By sinful sacrifice,
 Earth's fairest scenes are all his own,
 He is a Monarch, and his Throne
 Is built amid the skies !

THE
WIDOWED MOTHER.

BESIDE her Babe, who sweetly slept,
A widow'd mother sat and wept
O'er years of love gone by ;
And as the sobs thick-gathering came,
She murmur'd her dead Husband's name
'Mid that sad lullaby.

Well might that lullaby be sad,
For not one single friend she had
On this cold-hearted Earth ;
The sea will not give back its prey—
And they were wrapt in foreign clay
Who gave the Orphan birth.

Stedfastly as a star doth look
Upon a little murmuring brook,
She gazed upon the bosom

And fair brow of her sleeping Son—
“ O merciful Heaven ! when I am gone
“ Thine is this earthly blossom !”

While thus she sat—a sunbeam broke
Into the room ;—the Babe awoke,
And from his cradle smiled !
Ah me ! what kindling smiles met there !
I know not whether was more fair,
The Mother or her Child !

With joy fresh-sprung from short alarms,
The smiler stretched his rosy arms,
And to her bosom leapt—
All tears at once were swept away,
And said a face as bright as day,—
“ Forgive me ! that I wept !”

Sufferings there are from Nature sprung,
Ear hath not heard, nor Poet’s tongue
May venture to declare ;
But this as Holy Writ is sure,
“ The griefs she bids us here endure
She can herself repair !”

SONNET I.

WRITTEN ON THE BANKS OF WASTWATER,
DURING A STORM.

THERE is a lake hid far among the hills,
That raves around the throne of solitude,
Not fed by gentle streams, or playful rills,
But headlong cataract and rushing flood.
There, gleam no lovely hues of hanging wood,
No spot of sunshine lights her sullen side ;
For horror shaped the wild in wrathful mood,
And o'er the tempest heaved the mountain's pride.
If thou art one, in dark presumption blind,
Who vainly deem'st no spirit like to thine,
That lofty genius deifies thy mind,
Fall prostrate here at Nature's stormy shrine,
And as the thunderous scene disturbs thy heart,
Lift thy changed eye, and own how low thou art.

SONNET II.

WRITTEN ON THE BANKS OF WASTWATER,
DURING A CALM.

Is this the Lake, the cradle of the storms,
Where silence never tames the mountain-roar,
Where poets fear their self-created forms,
Or, sunk in trance severe, their God adore?
Is this the Lake, for ever dark and loud
With wave and tempest, cataract and cloud?
Wondrous, O Nature! is thy sovereign power,
That gives to horror hours of peaceful mirth;
For here might beauty build her summer-bower!
Lo! where yon rainbow spans the smiling earth,
And, clothed in glory, through a silent shower
The mighty Sun comes forth, a godlike birth;
While, 'neath his loving eye, the gentle Lake
Lies like a sleeping child too blest to wake!

SONNET III.

WRITTEN AT MIDNIGHT, ON HELM-CRAG.



Go up among the mountains, when the storm
Of midnight howls, but go in that wild mood,
When the soul loves tumultuous solitude,
And through the haunted air, each giant form
Of swinging pine, black rock, or ghostly cloud,
That veils some fearful cataract tumbling loud,
Seems to thy breathless heart with life embued.
'Mid those gaunt, shapeless things thou art alone !
The mind exists, thinks, trembles through the ear,
The memory of the human world is gone,
And time and space seem living only *here*.
Oh ! worship thou the visions then made known,
While sable glooms round Nature's temple roll,
And her dread anthem peals into thy soul.

SONNET IV.

THE VOICE OF THE MOUNTAINS.



LIST! while I tell what forms the mountain's voice!
—The storms are up; and from yon sable cloud
Down rush the rains; while 'mid the thunder loud
The viewless eagles in wild screams rejoice.
The echoes answer to the unearthly noise
Of hurling rocks, that, plunged into the Lake,
Send up a sullen groan: from clefts and caves,
As of half-murder'd wretch, hark! yells awake,
Or red-eyed phrensy as in chains he raves.
These form the mountain's voice; these, heard at night,
Distant from human being's known abode,
To earth some spirits bow in cold affright,
But some they lift to glory and to God.

SONNET V.**THE EVENING-CLOUD.**

A CLOUD lay cradled near the setting sun,
A gleam of crimson tinged its braided snow :
Long had I watched the glory moving on
O'er the still radiance of the Lake below.
Tranquil its spirit seem'd, and floated slow !
Even in its very motion, there was rest :
While every breath of eve that chanced to blow,
Wafted the traveller to the beauteous West.
Emblem, methought, of the departed soul !
To whose white robe the gleam of bliss is given ;
And by the breath of mercy made to roll
Right onwards to the golden gates of Heaven,
Where, to the eye of Faith, it peaceful lies,
And tells to man his glorious destinies.

SONNET VI.

WRITTEN ON THE SABBATH-DAY.

WHEN by God's inward light, a happy child,
I walk'd in joy, as in the open air,
It seem'd to my young thought the Sabbath smiled
With glory and with love. So still, so fair,
The Heavens look'd ever on that hallow'd morn,
That, without aid of memory, something there
Had surely told me of its glad return.
How did my little heart at evening burn,
When, fondly seated on my father's knee,
Taught by the lip of love, I breathed the prayer,
Warm from the fount of infant piety !
Much is my spirit changed ; for years have brought
Intenser feeling and expanded thought ;
—Yet, must I envy every child I see !

SONNET VII.

WRITTEN ON SKIDDAW, DURING A TEMPEST.



It was a dreadful day, when late I pass'd
O'er thy dim vastness, SKIDDAW !—Mist and cloud
Each subject Fell obscured, and rushing blast
To thee made darling music, wild and loud,
Thou Mountain-Monarch ! Rain in torrents play'd,
As when at sea a wave is borne to Heaven,
A watery spire, then on the crew dismay'd
Of reeling ship with downward wrath is driven.
I could have thought that every living form
Had fled, or perished in that savage storm,
So desolate the day. To me were given
Peace, calmness, joy : then, to myself I said,
Can grief, time, chance, or elements controul
Man's charter'd pride, the Liberty of Soul ?

SONNET VIII.



I WANDER'D lonely, like a pilgrim sad,
O'er mountains known but to the eagle's gaze ;
Yet, my hush'd heart, with Nature's beauty glad,
Slept in the shade, or gloried in the blaze.
Romantic vales stole winding to my eye
In gradual loveliness, like rising dreams ;
Fair, nameless tarns, that seem to blend with sky
Rocks of wild majesty, and elfin streams.
How strange, methought, I should have lived so near,
Nor ever worshipp'd Nature's altar here !
Strange ! say not so—hid from the world and thee,
Though in the midst of life their spirits move,
Thousands enjoy in holy liberty
The silent Eden of unenvied Love !

SONNET IX.

WRITTEN ON THE EVENING I HEARD OF THE
DEATH OF MY FRIEND, WILLIAM DUNLOP.

A GOLDEN cloud came floating o'er my head,
With kindred glories round the sun to blend !
Though fair the scene, my dreams were of the dead ;
—Since dawn of morning I had lost a friend.
I felt as if my sorrow ne'er could end :
A cold, pale phantom on a breathless bed,
The beauty of the crimson west subdued,
And sighs that seem'd my very life to rend,
The silent happiness of eve renew'd.
Grief, fear, regret, a self-tormenting brood
Dwelt on my spirit, like a ceaseless noise ;
But, oh ! what tranquil holiness ensued,
When, from that cloud, exclaimed a well-known voice,
—God sent me here, to bid my friend rejoice !

SONNET X.



THE Lake lay hid in mist, and to the sand
The little billows hastening silently,
Came sparkling on, in many a gladsome band,
Soon as they touched the shore, all doom'd to die !
I gazed upon them with a pensive eye,
For on that dim and melancholy strand,
I saw the image of Man's destiny.
So hurry we, right onwards, thoughtlessly,
Unto the coast of that Eternal Land !
Where, like the worthless billows in their glee,
The first faint touch unable to withstand,
We melt at once into Eternity.
O Thou who weigh'st the waters in thine hand,
My awe-struck Spirit puts her trust in Thee !

LINES

SACRED TO THE MEMORY

OF THE REV. JAMES GRAHAME,

AUTHOR OF "THE SABBATH," &c.



WITH tearless eyes and undisturbed heart,
 O Bard ! of sinless life and holiest song,
 I muse upon thy death-bed and thy grave ;
 Though round that grave the trodden grass still lies
 Besmeared with clay ; for many feet were there,
 Fast-rooted to the spot, when slowly sank
 Thy coffin, GRAHAME ! into the quiet cell.
 Yet, well I loved thee, even as one might love
 An elder brother, imaged in the soul
 With solemn features, half-creating awe,
 But smiling still with gentleness and peace.

Tears have I shed when thy most mournful voice
 Did tremblingly breathe forth that touching air
 By Scottish shepherd haply framed of old,
 Amid the silence of his pastoral hills,
 Weeping the flowers on Flodden-field that died.
 Wept too have I, when thou didst simply read
 From thine own lays so simply beautiful
 Some short pathetic tale of human grief,
 Or orison or hymn of deeper love,
 That might have won the sceptic's sullen heart
 To gradual adoration, and belief
 Of Him who died for us upon the Cross.
 Yea ! oft when thou wert well, and in the calm
 Of thy most Christian spirit blessing all
 Who look'd upon thee, with those gentlest smiles
 That never lay on human face but thine ;
 Even when thy serious eyes were lighted up
 With kindling mirth, and from thy lips distill'd
 Words soft as dew, and cheerful as the dawn,
 Then too I could have wept, for on thy face,
 Eye, voice, and smile, nor less thy bending frame
 By other cause impair'd than length of years,
 Lay something that still turn'd the thoughtful heart
 To melancholy dreams, dreams of decay,
 Of death and burial, and the silent tomb.

And of the tomb thou art an inmate now !
Methinks I see thy name upon the stone
Placed at thy head, and yet my cheeks are dry.
Tears could I give thee, when thou wert alive,
The mournful tears of deep foreboding love
That might not be restrain'd ; but now they seem
Most idle all ! thy worldly course is o'er,
And leaves such sweet remembrance in my soul
As some delightful music heard in youth,
Sad, but not painful, even more spirit-like
Than when it murmur'd through the shades of earth.

Short time wert thou allow'd to guide thy flock
Through the green pastures, where in quiet glides
The Siloah of the soul ! Scarce was thy voice
Familiar to their hearts, who felt that heaven
Did therein speak, when suddenly it fell
Mute, and for ever ! Empty now and still
The holy house which thou didst meekly grace,
When with uplifted hand, and eye devout,
Thy soul was breathed to Jesus, or explained
The words that lead unto eternal life.
From infancy thy heart was vow'd to God ;
And aye the hope that one day thou might'st keep
A little fold, from all the storms of sin
Safe-shelter'd, and by reason of thy prayers

Warm'd by the sunshine of approving Heaven,
Upheld thy spirit, destined for a while
To walk far other paths, and with the crowd
Of worldly men to mingle. Yet even then,
Thy life was ever such as well became
One whose pure soul was fixed upon the Cross !
And when with simple fervent eloquence,
GRAHAME pled the poor man's cause, the list'ner oft
Thought how becoming would his visage smile
Across the house of God, how beautifully
That man would teach the saving words of Heaven !

How well he taught them, many a one will feel
Unto their dying day ; and when they lie
On the grave's brink, unfearing and composed,
Their speechless souls will bless the holy man
Whose voice exhorted, and whose footsteps led
Unto the paths of life ; nor sweeter hope,
Next to the gracious look of Christ, have they
Than to behold his face who saved their souls.

But closed on earth thy blessed ministry !
And while thy native Scotland mourns her son
Untimely reft from her maternal breast,
Weeps the fair Sister-Land, with whom ere while

The stranger sojourn'd, stranger but in birth,
For well she loved thee, as thou wert her own.

On a most clear and noiseless Sabbath-night
I heard that thou wert gone, from the soft voice
Of one who knew thee not, but deeply loved
Thy spirit meekly shining in thy song.
At such an hour the death of one like thee
Gave no rude shock, nor by a sudden grief
Destroy'd the visions from the starry sky
Then settling in my soul. The moonlight slept
With a diviner sadness on the air ;
The tender dimness of the night appeared
Darkening to deeper sorrow, and the voice
Of the far torrent from the silent hills
Flow'd, as I listen'd, like a funeral strain
Breath'd by some mourning solitary thing.
Yet Nature in her pensiveness still wore
A blissful smile, as if she sympathized
With those who grieved that her own Bard was dead,
And yet was happy that his spirit dwelt
At last within her holiest sanctuary,
'Mid long expecting angels.

And if e'er

Faith, fearless faith in the eternal bliss

Of a departed brother, may be held
By beings blind as we, that faith should dry
All eyes that weep for GRAHAME ; or through their
tears

Shew where he sits august and beautiful
On the right hand of Jesus, 'mid the saints
Whose glory he on earth so sweetly sang.
No fears have we when some delightful child
Falls from its innocence into the grave !
Soon as we know its little breath is gone,
We see it lying in its Saviour's breast,
A heavenly flower there fed with heavenly dew.
Childlike in all that makes a child so dear
To God and man, and ever consecrates
Its cradle and its grave, my GRAHAME, wert thou !
And had'st thou died upon thy mother's breast
Ere thou could'st lisp her name, more fit for heaven
Thou scarce had'st been, than when thy honour'd head
Was laid into the dust, and Scotland wept
O'er hill and valley for her darling Bard.

How beautiful is genius when combined
With holiness ! Oh, how divinely sweet
The tones of earthly harp, whose chords are touch'd
By the soft hand of Piety, and hung
Upon Religion's shrine, there vibrating

With solemn music in the ear of God.
 And must the Bard from sacred themes refrain ?
 Sweet were the hymns in patriarchal days,
 That, kneeling in the silence of his tent,
 Or on some moonlight hill, the shepherd pour'd
 Unto his heavenly Father. Strains survive
 Erst chaunted to the lyre of Israel,
 More touching far than ever poet breathed
 Amid the Grecian isles, or later times
 Have heard in Albion, land of every lay.
 Why therefore are ye silent, ye who know
 The trance of adoration, and behold
 Upon your bended knees the throne of Heaven,
 And him who sits thereon ? Believe it not,
 That Poetry, in purer days the nurse,
 Yea ! parent oft of blissful piety,
 Should silent keep from service of her God,
 Nor with her summons, loud but silver-toned,
 Startle the guilty dreamer from his sleep,
 Bidding him gaze with rapture or with dread
 On regions where the sky for ever lies
 Bright as the sun himself, and trembling all
 With ravishing music, or where darkness broods
 O'er ghastly shapes, and sounds not to be borne.

Such glory, GRAHAME ! is thine : Thou didst de-
 spise

To win the ear of this degenerate age
By gorgeous epithets, all idly heap'd
On theme of earthly state, or, idler still,
By tinkling measures and unchasten'd lays,
Warbled to pleasure and her syren-train,
Profaning the best name of poesy.
With loftier aspirations, and an aim
More worthy man's immortal nature, Thou
That holiest spirit that still loves to dwell
In the upright heart and pure, at noon of night
Didst fervently invoke, and, led by her
Above the Aonian mount, send from the stars
Of heaven such soul-subduing melody
As Bethlehem-shepherds heard when Christ was born

It is the Sabbath-day : Creation sleeps
Cradled within the arms of heavenly love !
The mystic day, when from the vanquish'd grave
The world's Redeemer rose, and hail'd the light
Of God's forgiving smile. Obscured and pale
Were then the plumes of prostrate seraphim,
Then hush'd the universe her sphere-born strain,
When from his throne, Paternal Deity
Declared the Saviour not in vain had shed
His martyr'd glory round the accursed Cross,
That fallen man might sit in Paradise,

And earth to heaven ascend in jubilee.
O blessed day, by God and man beloved !
With more surpassing glory breaks thy dawn
Upon my soul, remembering the sweet hymns
That he, whom nations evermore shall name
The Sabbath-Bard, in gratulation high
Breathed forth to thee, as from the golden urn
That holds the incense of immortal song.

That Poem, so divinely melancholy
Throughout its reigning spirit, yet withal
Bathing in hues of winning gentleness
The pure religion that alone can save,
Full many a wanderer to the paths of peace
Ere now hath made return, and he who framed
Its hallow'd numbers, in the realms of bliss
Hath met and known the smiles of seraph-souls,
By his delightful genius saved from death.
Oft when the soul is lost in thoughtless guilt,
And seeming deaf unto the still small voice
Of conscience and of God, some simple phrase
Of beauty or sublimity will break
The spell that link'd us to the bands of sin,
And all at once, as waking from a dream,
We shudder at the past, and bless the light
That breaks upon us like the new-born day.

Even so it fares with them, who to this world
Have yielded up their spirits, and, impure
In thought and act, have lived without a sense
Of God, who counts the beatings of their hearts.
But men there are of a sublimer mould,
Who dedicate with no unworthy zeal
To human Science, up the toilsome steep
Where she in darkness dwells, with pilgrim-feet
By night and day unwearied strive to climb,
Pride their conductor, glory their reward.
Too oft, alas ! even in the search of truth
They pass her on the way, although she speak
With loving voice, and cast on them her eyes
So beautifully innocent and pure.
To such, O GRAHAME ! thy voice cries from the tomb
Thy worth they loved, thy talents they admired,
And when they think how peaceful was thy life,
Thy death far more than peaceful, though thou
sought'st,
Above all other knowledge, that of God
And his redeeming Son ; when o'er the page
Where thy mild soul for ever sits enshrined,
They hang with soften'd hearts, faith may descend
Upon them as they muse, or hope that leads
The way to faith, even as the morning-star
Shines brightly, heralding approaching day.

But happier visions still now bless my-soul.
While lonely wandering o'er the hills and dales
Of my dear native country, with such love
As they may guess, who, from their father's home
Sojourning long and far, fall down and kiss
The grass and flowers of Scotland, in I go,
Not doubting a warm welcome from the eyes
Of woman, man, and child, into a cot
Upon a green hill-side, and almost touch'd
By its own nameless stream that bathes the roots
Of the old ash tree swinging o'er the roof.
Most pleasant, GRAHAME ! unto thine eye and heart
Such humble home ! there often hast thou sat
'Mid the glad family listening to thy voice
So silently, the ear might then have caught
Without the rustle of the falling leaf.
And who so sweetly ever sang as thou,
The joys and sorrows of the poor man's life ?
Not fancifully drawn, that one might weep,
Or smile, he knew not why, but with the hues
Of truth all brightly glistening, to the heart
Cheering, as earth's soft verdure to the eye,
Yet still and mournful as the evening light.
More powerful in the sanctity of death,
There reigns thy spirit over those it loved !
Some chosen books by pious men composed,

Kept from the dust, in every cottage lie
Through the wild loneliness of Scotia's vales,
Beside the Bible, by whose well-known truths
All human thoughts are by the peasant tried.
O blessed privilege of Nature's Bard !
To cheer the house of virtuous poverty,
With gleams of light more beautiful than oft
Play o'er the splendours of the palace wall.
Methinks I see a fair and lovely child
Sitting composed upon his mother's knee,
And reading with a low and lisping voice
Some passage from the Sabbath, while the tears
Stand in his little eyes so softly blue,
Till, quite o'ercome with pity, his white arms
He twines around her neck, and hides his sighs
Most infantine, within her gladden'd breast,
Like a sweet lamb, half sportive, half afraid,
Nestling one moment 'neath its bleating dam.
And now the happy mother kisses oft
The tender-hearted child, lays down the book,
And asks him if he doth remember still
The stranger who once gave him, long ago,
A parting kiss, and blest his laughing eyes !
His sobs speak fond remembrance, and he weeps
To think so kind and good a man should die.

Though dead on earth, yet he from heaven looks
down

On thee, sweet child ! and others pure like thee !
Made happier, though an angel, by the sight
Of happiness, and virtue by himself
Created or preserved ; and oft his soul
Leaves for a while her amaranthine bowers,
And dimly hears the choral symphonies
Of spirits singing round the Saviour's throne,
Delighted with a glimpse of Scotland's vales
Winding round hills where once his pious hymns
Were meditated in his silent heart,
Or with those human beings here beloved,
Whether they smile, as virtue ever smiles,
With sunny countenance gentle and benign,
Or a slight shade of sadness seems to say,
That they are thinking of the sainted soul
That looks from Heaven on them !—

A holy creed

It is, and most delightful unto all
Who feel how deeply human sympathies
Blend with our hopes of heaven, which holds that
death
Divideth not, as by a roaring sea,
Departed spirits from this lower sphere.

How could the virtuous even in heaven be blest,
Unless they saw the lovers and the friends,
Whom soon they hope to greet ! A placid lake
Between Time floateth and Eternity,
Across whose sleeping waters murmur oft
The voices of the immortal, hither brought
Soft as the thought of music in the soul.
Deep, deep the love we bear unto the dead !
The adoring reverence that we humbly pay
To one who is a spirit, still partakes
Of that affectionate tenderness we own'd
Towards a being, once, perhaps, as frail
And human as ourselves, and in the shape
Celestial, and angelic lineaments,
Shines a fair likeness of the form and face
That won in former days our earthly love.

O GRAHAME ! even I in midnight dreams behold
Thy placid aspect, more serenely fair
Than the sweet moon that calms the autumnal heaven.
Thy voice steals, 'mid the pauses of the wind,
Unto my listening soul more touchingly
Than the pathetic tones of airy harp
That sound at evening like a spirit's song.
Yet, many are there dearer to thy shade,
Yea, dearer far than I ; and when their tears

They dry at last, (and wisdom bids them weep,
 If long and oft, O sure not bitterly,)

Then wilt thou stand before their raptured eyes
 As beautiful as kneeling saint e'er deem'd
 In his bright cell Messiah's vision'd form.

I may not think upon her blissful dreams
 Who bears thy name on earth, and in it feels
 A Christian glory and a pious pride,
 That must illume the widow's lonely path
 With never-dying sunshine.—To her soul
 Soft sound the strains now flowing fast from mine !
 And in those tranquil hours when she withdraws
 From loftier consolations, may the tears,
 (For tears will fall, most idle though they be,)

Now shed by me to her but little known,
 Yield comfort to her, as a certain pledge
 That many a one, though silent and unseen,
 Thinks of her and the children at her knees,
 Blest for the father's and the husband's sake.

TROUTBECK CHAPEL.

How sweet and solemn at the close of day,
 After a long and lonely pilgrimage
 Among the mountains, where our spirits held
 With wildering fancy and her kindred powers
 High converse, to descend as from the clouds
 Into a quiet valley, fill'd with trees
 By Nature planted, crowding round the brink
 Of an oft-hidden rivulet, or hung
 A beauteous shelter o'er the humble roof
 Of many a moss-grown cottage !

In that hour

Of pensive happiness, the wandering man
 Looks for some spot of still profounder rest,
 Where nought may break the solemn images
 Sent by the setting sun into his soul.
 Up to yon simple edifice he walks,

That seems beneath its sable grove of pines
More silent than the home where living thing
Abides, yea, even than desolated tower
Wrapt in its ivy-shroud.

I know it well,

The Village-Chapel ! Many a year ago,
That little dome to God was dedicate ;
And ever since, hath undisturbed peace
Sat on it, moveless as the brooding dove
That must not leave her nest. A mossy wall,
Bathed though in ruins with a flush of flowers,
(A lovely emblem of that promised life
That springs from death,) doth placidly enclose
The bed of rest, where with their fathers sleep
The children of the vale, and the calm stream
That murmurs onward with the self-same tone
For ever, by the mystic power of sound
Binding the present with the past, pervades
The holy hush as if with God's own voice,
Filling the listening heart with piety.

Oh ! ne'er shall I forget the hour, when first
Thy little chapel stole upon my heart,
Secluded TROUTBECK ! 'Twas the Sabbath-morn,
And up the rocky banks of thy wild stream

I wound my path, full oft I ween delay'd
 By sounding waterfall, that 'mid the calm
 Awoke such solemn thoughts as suited well
 The day of peace ; till all at once I came
 Out of the shady glen, and with fresh joy
 Walk'd on encircled by green pastoral hills.
 Before me suddenly thy Chapel rose
 As if it were an image : even then
 The noise of thunder roll'd along the sky,
 And darkness veil'd the heights,—a summer-storm
 Of short forewarning and of transient power.
 Ah me ! how beautifully silent thou
 Didst smile amid the tempest ! O'er thy roof
 Arch'd a fair rainbow, that to me appear'd
 A holy shelter to thee in the storm,
 And made thee shine amid the brooding gloom,
 Bright as the morning star. Between the fits
 Of the loud thunder rose the voice of Psalms,
 A most soul-moving sound. There unappall'd,
 A choir of youths and maidens hymned their God,
 With tones that robb'd the thunder of its dread,
 Bidding it rave in vain.

Out came the sun
 In glory from his clouded tabernacle ;
 And, waken'd by the splendour, up the lark

Rose with a loud and yet a louder song,
Chaunting to heaven the hymn of gratitude.
The service closed ; and o'er the church-yard spread
The happy flock who in that peaceful fold
Had worshipp'd Jesus, carrying to their homes
The comfort of a faith that cannot die,
That to the young supplies a guiding light
Steadier than reason's, and far brighter too,
And to the aged sanctifies the grass
That grows upon the grave.

O happy lot,
Methought, to tend a little flock like this,
Loving them all, and by them all beloved !
So felt their shepherd on that Sabbath-morn
Returning their kind smiles ;—a pious man,
Content in this lone vale to teach the truths
Our Saviour taught, nor wishing other praise
Than of his great task-master. Yet his youth
Not unadorn'd with science, nor the lore
Becoming in their prime accomplish'd men,
Told that among the worldly eminent
Might lie his shining way :—but, wiser far,
He to the shades of solitude retired,
The birth-place of his fathers, and there vow'd
His talents and his virtues, rarest both,

To God who gave them, rendering by his voice
This beauteous Chapel still more beautiful,
And the blameless dwellers in this quiet dale
Happier in life and death.

A

CHURCH-YARD DREAM.

METHOUGHT that in a Burial-ground
One still, sad vernal day,
Upon a little daisied mound
I in a slumber lay ;
While faintly through my dream I heard
The hymning of that holy Bird,
Who with more gushing rapture sings
The higher up in Heaven float his unwearied wings !

In that my mournful reverie,
Such song of heavenly birth
The voice seemed of a Soul set free
From this imprisoning Earth ;
Higher and higher still it soared,
A holy Anthem that adored,

Till vanished song and singer blest
In the blue depths of everlasting rest.

Just then a Child in sportive glee
Came gliding o'er the graves,
Like a lone bird that on the sea
Floats dallying with the waves ;
Upon the vernal flowers awhile
She poured the beauty of her smile,
Then laid her bright cheek on the sod,
And, overpowered with joy, slept in the eye of God.

The flowers that shine all round her head
May well be breathing sweet,
For flowers are they that Spring hath shed
To deck her winding-sheet ;
And well the tenderest gleams may fall
Of sunshine on that hillock small
On which she sleeps, for they have smiled
O'er the predestined grave of that unconscious
Child.

In bridal garments, white as snow,
A solitary Maid
Doth meekly bring a sunny glow
Into that solemn shade.

A Church-yard seems a joyful place
In the visit of so sweet a face ;
A soul is in that deep blue eye
Too good to live on earth—too beautiful to die.

But Death behind a marble Tomb
Looks out upon his prey,
And smiles to know that heavenly bloom
Is yet of earthly clay.
Far off I hear a wailing wide,
And, while I gaze upon that Bride,
A silent Wraith before me stands,
And points unto a grave with cold, pale, clasped hands.

A Matron beautiful and bright,
As is the silver Moon
Whose lustre tames the sparkling light
Of the starry eyes of June,
Is shining o'er the Church-yard lone,
While circling her as in a zone,
Delighted dance five Cherubs fair,
And round their native urn shake wide their golden
hair.

O Children they are holy things,
In sight of Earth and Heaven !

An Angel shields with guardian wings,
The home where they are given.
Strong power there is in children's tears,
And stronger in their lisped prayers—
But the vulture stoops down from above,
And, 'mid her orphan brood, bears off the Parent
Dove.

The young—the youthful—the mature
Have smiled and all past by,
As if nought lovely could endure
Beneath the envious sky ;
While bowed with age and age's woes,
Still near—yet still far off the close
Of weary life, yon aged Crone
Can scarce with blind eyes find her Husband's funeral stone.

All dead the joyous, bright, and free,
To whom this life was dear !—
The green leaves shivered from the tree
And dangling left the sere !
O dim wild world !—but from the sky
Down came the glad Lark waveringly,
And startled by his liquid mirth
I rose to walk in Faith the darkling paths of Earth.

THE
MAGIC MIRROR.

METHOUGHT beneath a Castle huge I stood,
 That seem'd to grow out of a rock sublime,
 Through the dominion of its solitude
 Augustly frowning at the rage of Time.
 Its lofty minarets, indistinct and dim,
 Look'd through the brooding clouds; and as a
 smile
 Of passing sunlight show'd these structures grim
 Burning like fire, I could have thought the while
 That they were warriors keeping watch on high,
 All motionless, and sheath'd in radiant panoply.

What mortal feet these rampart-heights might scale !
 Lo ! like black atoms mingling in the sky
 The far-off rooks and their fleet shadows sail ;
 Scarce hears the soul their melancholy cry.

What lovely colours bathed the frowning brow

Of that imperial mansion ! Radiant green,
And purple fading in a yellow glow !

Oh ! lovelier ne'er on mossy bank was seen
In vernal joy ; while bands of charter'd flowers
Revell'd like fairy sprites along their palace towers.

Down sunk the draw-bridge with a thund'ring shock ;

And in an instant, ere the eye could know,
Bound the stern castle to th' opposing rock,

And hung in calmness o'er the flood below ;—
A roaring flood, that, born amid the hills,

Forced his lone path through many a darksome glen,
Till, join'd by all his tributary rills,

From lake and tarn, from marish and from fen,
He left his empire with a kingly glee,
And fiercely bade recoil the billows of the sea.

I felt it was a dream ; nor wish'd to wake :

Though dim and pale by fits the vision grew ;
And oft that ocean dwindled to a lake,

And cliff and castle from the clouds withdrew.
Oft, all I heard was but a gentle swell,

Like the wild music of the summer leaves ;
Till, like an army mustering in the dell,

The blasts came rushing from their pine-clad caves,

And swept the silence of the scene away,
Even like a city storm'd upon the Sabbath-day.*

Though strange my dream, I knew the Scottish strand.

And the bold Frith that rolling fiercely bright
Far-distant faded 'mid that mountain land,

As 'mid dark clouds a sudden shower of light.

Long have my lips been mute in Scotland's praise !

Now is the hour for inspiration's song !

The shadowy glories of departed days

Before my tranced soul in tumult throng,

And I, with fearless voice, on them will call,

From camp and battle-field, from princely bower
and hall.

With only my still shadow by my side,

And Nature's lifeless things that slept around,

I seem'd to be ! when, from the portal wide,

Startling as sudden light, or wandering sound,

Onwards a figure came, with stately brow,

And as he glanced upon the ruin'd Pile

A look of regal pride, " Say, who art thou,

(His countenance bright'ning with a scornful smile,

* The image in this line is from a poem of Mr Coleridge.

He sternly cried,) whose footsteps rash profane
The wild romantic realm where I have willed to reign?"

But ere to these proud words I could reply,
How changed that scornful face to soft and mild ;
A witching frenzy glitter'd in his eye,
Harmless, withal, as that of playful child.
And when once more the gracious vision spoke,
I felt the voice familiar to mine ear ;
While many a faded dream of earth awoke
Connected strangely with that unknown Seer,
Who now stretch'd forth his arm, and on the sand
A circle round me traced, as with Magician's wand.

Desire or power then had I none to move,
In that sweet prison a delighted thrall ;
Died all remembrances of daily love,
Or, if they glimmer'd, vain I held them all.
Alone on that Magician could I gaze ;
His voice alone compell'd was I to hear,
Wild as the autumnal wind that fitful plays
A wailing dirge unto the dying year,
Amid the silence of the midnight hour,
Moaned through the ivied window of a mouldering
tower.

He felt his might, and sported with my soul,

Even as the sea-wind dallies with a boat
That now doth fleeter than the billows roll,

Now, as at anchor, on the calm doth float.
Nor heeded he to see my senses lock'd

In the dim maze of wildering phantasy ;
But ever and anon my wonder mock'd

With careless looks of gentle tyranny.
Well-used was that Magician to the sight
Of souls by him subdued to terror and delight.

How bold the fearful oft in dreams become !

Familiar in the midst of all things strange !
Unshuddering then, with spirits will we roam,
Calm and unconscious of th' unearthly change !
Even so it fared with me ; ere long I grew

Familiar with the wizard of my dream,
When, from his lofty breast he slowly drew
What seem'd a Mirror by its glancing gleam,
And bade me therein look, where I might see
Wild sights come floating by in clouds of glamoury.

Then burn'd that glass insufferably bright,

Till closed my eyelids with the sudden pain ;
As, when the downward rays of mid-day light
Kindle to fire upon the verdant main.

Ne'er diamond spark outshone the common air
With purer radiance, nor the setting Sun
Stream'd on the window of cathedral fair
A deeper blaze, to tell his course was run :
I gazed again ; and lo ! that Mirror soon
With tenderest lustre smiled, like a September
Moon.

Unto another world it opening gave.
There, castles stood majestic in their prime,
And mailed chieftains, rising from the grave,
Their banners hung o'er battlements sublime.
Oft changed the magic scene ; here Lady bright,
In hazel grove, beneath the western star,*
Listen'd the love-tale of her faithful Knight ;
Here the red beacon blazed, and to the war
Fierce clans come rushing, while the blaze illumines
Targe, spear, and battle-axe, and widely-tossing plumes.

How sweet the Moon on yon fair Abbey shone ! †
Bathing in liquid light so sadly faint
The flowerets drooping pale in sculptured stone,
And the still image of each mouldering saint.

* The meeting of Margaret and Cranstoun, in the Lay of the
Last Minstrel.

† Melrose.

And what may bring a Warrior's crested head *

Unto these holy courts and cloisters dim ?
Thou daring spirit, why disturb the dead ?

Yawns the damp tomb, and lo ! a spectre grim,†
Yet with his dead face beautiful withal,
Lies 'mid immortal light that fills the vaulted hall.

The Abbey melted like a cloud away,

And many a gorgeous pageant charm'd my heart :
But how may I recount in feeble lay

The beauteous marvels of that wizard's art ?
No ! not unto myself dare I to tell

What various visions o'er that Mirror roll'd,
Till view'd my soften'd soul a lovely dell,

Where upon Yarrow's banks a Minstrel old ‡
Dit sit, and wake to lords and ladies high
The last expiring strains of Border Minstrelsy.

Gone was the Magic Glass ! I look'd around ;

There hung the castle, like a thunder-cloud
Above the darken'd sea whose hollow sound

Subdued my spirit more than tempest loud ;
And by my side, upon that solemn shore,
That Wizard strange did like an Image stand,

* Deloraine.

† Michael Scott.

‡ Conclusion of the Lay of the Last Minstrel.

Watching the working of the ancient lore

That o'er the glass had pass'd at his command : ,
And when he saw me lost in wild surprise,
Once more he flash'd its light upon my startled eyes.

Ye lesser glories, in my spirit sleep !

But proudly fling thy white arms to the sea,
Queen of the unconquer'd North !* lo ! yonder deep'
With all his subject waves, doth worship thee !
Stately thou sittest on thy mountain throne,
Thy towers and temples like a cloudy sky ;
And scarce canst tell what fabrics are thine own,
Hung 'mid the air-built phantoms floating by.
Oh ! ne'er may that bright diadem be shorn,
By thee, for many an age, majestically worn !

Nor dim and silent were thy regal halls,

(The mansion, now, of grief and solitude !)
But mirth and music shook thy pictured walls,
And Scotland's monarch reign'd in Holy-Rood.
Well did I know, 'mid banneret and peer,
Star of the Stuart-line, accomplish'd James !
His graceful words I almost seem'd to hear,
As, lightly ranging 'mid those high-born dames,

* See the description of Edinburgh in *Marmion*.

To each, in turn, some gallant wish he sigh'd,
But linger'd still near one,* his ruin and his pride !

Thou field of carnage ! silent be thy name !

Where Scotland's royal standard sunk in blood ;
While round their monarch, like a guardian flame,
Wasted in vain, his dying nobles stood.
Gladly I saw dark clouds in tumult pass
O'er that red sea of horror and despair ;
And the last image in the Magic Glass,
Even like the seraph Mercy, saintly fair,
Over her wounded foe hung sorrowing, †
And slaked his burning thirst with water from the
spring.

“ Dry up those tears,” the gentle wizard cried,
“ Nor weep while nature in her glory smiles !”—
And lo ! with sylvan mountains beautified,
Incumbent cliffs, lone bays, and fairy isles,
Floated a lake ‡ that I could scarce behold,
So bright it gleam'd with its enchanted waves !
While ever and anon wild music roll'd
From fractured rocks, and undiscover'd caves,
As if some spirit warbled from the steep
A low unearthly song, to charm the lake to sleep.

* Dame Heron.

† Clara and Marmion.

‡ Loch Catrine.

A spirit !—lo ! her fairy vessel glides
Round the green edge of yonder oaken brake !
Before its prow the sparkling wave divides
In homage to the Lady of the Lake !
While, gazing from the shore, an armed Knight *
Holds distant parley with that unknown Queen,
Whose eyes, with fear and wonder, glistening bright,
Lend a new wildness to the mountain scene !
O lovelier far, in that bewilder'd trance,
Than Lady of the Mere,† by shores of old romance !

Wild rose her palace, 'mid the unbroken calm,
Burning with flowers, that like a wreath of light,
Girdled the living dome, and breathing balm
Sweet to the soul, as all those hues so bright !
The work of human hands it may not be,
And unto dreams of fairy power gave birth ;
Yet, 'mid such dreams, the spirit paused to see
Some dim-discover'd traces of this earth,
While on that lady's countenance divine
A pensive shadow lay, that told her mortal line.

Yea ! worldly cares to that enchanted dome,
Despite of Nature's guardian power, intrude ;

* Fitz-James.

† See Wordsworth's Poems.

Though bathed in sunshine, yet a stormy gloom

Is gathering o'er the hermit-solitude.

In evil hour yon princely stranger came !

For ambush'd foemen glare from every dell :—

Clan-Alpin hath beheld the Cross of Flame,

The sign of war her children love so well ;

And all her heathery mountains teem with life,

With warriors gaunt and grim, and arm'd for mortal
strife.

Lake, rock, and mountain, cataract and flood,

Mine eyes behold no more ; with eager breath,

I gaze on clashing faulchions dim'd with blood,

And plumed helms that seem to frown with death.

One of those shapes so beautiful and brave,

Like oak-tree sternly bending to the blast,

Must fall this day—but proud shall be his grave !

In wrath life's bootless energy hath past !—

Fallen is the eagle that so strongly flew—

Long Celtic bards shall wail the dirge of Roderick
Dhu.

Oh ! not by vulgar arm was Roderick slain !

Less than a king the victor may not be :

See ! how his war-steed bears him o'er the plain,

How nods his crest with regal majesty !

Strevlina's gate may bow her lofty head
To kiss the plume that mock'd each hostile sword,
Nor by such homage be dishonoured :
Methinks, in his disguise, she knows her lord,
As if beneath her arch King James did ride,
With all his unhelm'd peerage by his gracious side.

By kingly acts a king should aye be known !
Then look through yonder lustre-beaming hall :
Stately the figures there,—yea ! every one !
But Scotland's monarch far outshines them all.
And is she here, the Lady of the Lake ?
Hush thy quick-beating heart, thou trembling
thing !

And let him smile who suffers for thy sake. *
On your betrothed arms the golden ring
The Knight of Snowden's kingly hands impose,
A talisman that breaks the spell of all your woes.

The wizard's voice here touch'd upon my heart,
And quick I wak'd, like one who, scarce asleep,
Springs from his slumber with a sudden start
To shun some yawning gulph, or headlong steep.
“Thou lov'st,” said he, “on warlike pomp to gaze ;
'Tis a true Scottish pride—look here again,

And dream no more of deeds of other days."—

Glad I obeyed,—and lo ! the shores of Spain *
Rose beautifully terrible like heaven,
When all its lowering clouds in wrathful hosts are driven.

Woe to yon Tyrant ! to his legions woe !

Joy to the vulture on his herdless rock !

Glad would ye be to hear the Ebro flow

Once more, and leave the shepherd with his flock,
Ye savage slaves, that shame the name of France !

But ne'er that sound of safety must ye hear.
List ye that tread !—the red-cross ranks advance !

Vain valour's stand, and vain the flight of fear,
For who shall live, when, shouting in their joy,
The British brother-bands move onwards to destroy ?

Wasted on air were these warm words of mine—

The wizard and his Magic Glass were fled ;
The solemn hush, that speaks the day's decline,
Across the sea without a wave was shed.

The rooks had ceased their cawing in the sky,

Nor humm'd the wild-bee on the wall-flower bright
That on the old tower bloom'd luxuriantly ;

Then rose the lovely Star that brings the night,
Till Luna enter'd on her placid reign,
And a sweet crescent smiled, reflected from the main.

* Don Roderick.

THE
CHILDREN'S DANCE.

How calm and beautiful the frosty Night
Has stol'n unnotic'd like the hush of sleep
O'er Grassmere-vale ! Beneath the mellowing light
How sinks in softness every rugged steep !
The old Church-tower a solemn watch doth keep
O'er the sweet Village she adorns so well ;
Faintly the freezing stream is heard to weep,
Wild-murmuring far within its icy cell,
And hark ! across the Lake, clear chimes the Chapel-
bell.

Soon will the Moon and all her Stars be here :
A stealing light proclaims her o'er yon hill !
Slowly she raiseth up her radiant sphere,
And stillness, at her smile, becomes more still.

My heart forgets all thoughts of human ill,
And man seems happy as his place of birth :
All things that yield him joy my spirit fill
With kindred joy ; and ev'n his humblest mirth
Seems at this peaceful hour, to beautify the Earth.

Beyond this vale my fancy may not fly,
Held by its circle in a magic chain ;
Of merry-making, and festivity
Even 'mid this moonlight-scene shall be my strain.
Nor gracious Nature ! when I wake again
A hymn of loftier temper in thy praise,
Wilt thou the Poet's homage-song disdain,
For Thou hast never listened to his lays,
Who lov'd not lowly life and all its simple ways.

Through many a vale how rang each snow-roof'd cot,
This livelong day with rapture blithe and wild !
All thoughts but of the lingering eve forgot
Both by grave Parent, and light-hearted Child.
Hail to the Night ! whose image oft beguiled
Youth's transient sadness with a startling cheer !
The *Ball-night* this by youngers proudly styled !
The joy at distance bright burns brighter near—
Now smiles the happiest hour of all their happy year !

All day the earthen floors have felt their feet
Twinkling quick measures to the liquid sound
Of their own small-piped voices shrilly sweet,
As hand in hand they wheel'd their giddy round.
Ne'er fairy-revels on the greensward mound
To dreaming bard a lovelier show display'd,
Titania's self did ne'er with lighter bound
Dance o'er the diamonds of the dewy glade,
Than danc'd, at peep of morn, mine own dear moun-
tain-maid.

Oft in her own small mirror had the gleam,
The soften'd gleam of her rich golden hair,
That o'er her white neck floated in a stream,
Kindled to smiles that Infant's visage fair,
Half-conscious she that beauty glistened there!
Oft had she glanced her restless eyes aside
On silken sash so bright and debonnair,
Then to her mother flown with leaf-like glide,
Who kiss'd her cherub-head with tears of silent pride.

But all these glad rehearsals now are o'er,
And young and old in many a glittering throng,
By tinkling copse-wood, and hill-pathway pour,
Cheering the air with laughter and with song,
Those first arriv'd think others tarrying long,

And chide them smiling with a friendly jeer,
“ To let the music waste itself was wrong,
“ So stirringly it strikes upon the ear,
“ The lame might dance,” they cry, “ the aged-deaf
might hear.”

And lo ! the crowded ball-room is alive
With restless motion, and a humming noise,
Like on a warm spring-morn a sunny hive,
When round their Queen the waking bees rejoice.
Sweet blends with graver tones the silvery voice
Of children rushing eager to their seats ;
The Master proud of his fair flock employs
His guiding beck that due attention meets,—
List ! through the silent room each anxious bosom
beats !

Most beautiful and touching is the scene !
More blissful far to me than Fancy's bower !
Arch'd are the walls with wreaths of holly green,
Whose dark red-berries blush beside the flower
That kindly comes to charm the wintry hour,
The Christmas rose ! the glory white as snow !
The dusky roof seems brighten'd by the power
Of bloom and verdure mingling thus below,
Whence many a taper-light sends forth a cheerful glow.

'There sit together tranquilly arrayed
The Friends and Parents of the infant-band ;
A Mother nodding to her timid maid
With cheering smiles—or beckoning with her hand,
A sign of love the child doth understand.
There, deeper thoughts the Father's heart employ,
His features grave with fondness melting-bland,
He asks his silent heart, with gushing joy,
If all the vale can match his own exulting Boy.

See ! where in blooming rows the children sit !
All loving partners by the idle floor
As yet divided—save where boy doth flit,
Lightly as small wave running 'long the shore,
To whisper something, haply said before,
Unto the soft cheek of his laughing May !
The whiles the master eyes the opening door,
And, fearing longer than one smile to stay,
Turns on his noiseless heel, and jocund wheels away.

O Band of living Flowers ! O taintless wreath !
By nature nourish'd 'mid her mountain air !
O sweet unfolding buds, that blush and breathe
Of innocence and love ! I scarce may dare
To gaze upon you !—What soft gleams of hair !

What peaceful foreheads ! and what heavenly eyes !
Bosoms so sweet will never harbour care ;
Such spiritual breath was never made for sighs !
For you still breathe on Earth the gales of Paradise.

But I will call you by your human name,—
Children of Earth, of Frailty, and Distress !
Alternate objects ye of praise and blame !
The spell is broken—do I love you less ?
Ah ! no !—a deep'ning, mournful tenderness
Yearns at my heart, e'en now when I behold
What trivial joys the human soul can bless !
I feel a pathos that can ne'er be told
Breathed from yon *mortal* locks of pure ethereal
gold.

Where now that angel face—that fairy frame—
The joyful beauty of that burnish'd head
That shining forth o'er all—a star-like flame—
Once through this room admiring rapture shed !
Can that fair breast so full of life be dead !
All mute those ruddy lips whose dewy balm
As if through breathing flowers sweet music shed !
Those bounding limbs chain'd now in endless calm—
—For her last Sabbath-day was sung the funeral
psalm !

One reverend head I miss amid the throng—
'Tis bowed in sorrow o'er his cottage hearth !
The tread of dancing feet—the voice of song—
The gladsome viol—and the laugh of mirth
To him seem mockery on this lonesome earth.
Rich in one child—he felt as if his store
Of bliss might never yield to mortal dearth ;
But dry the cup of joy that once ran o'er !
—Now that grey-headed man is poorest of the poor.

That was a stirring sound—my heart feels light
Once more, and happy as a lamb at play.
At music such as this pale thought takes flight ;
It speaks of Scotland too, a dear strathspey !
No vulgar skill the Master doth display,
The living bow leaps dancing o'er the strings,
The wrinkled face of Age is bright as day,
While each glad child in fancied measure springs,
And feels as if through air he skimm'd on flying wings.

A hush of admiration chains the breath,
And calms the laughing features of us all ;
The room, erewhile so loud, is still as death—
For lo ! the Infant-monarchs of the ball
Rise from their seats, rejoicing at the call,

And move soft-gliding to their proper place !
He in his triumph rising straight and tall ;
She light of air, and delicate of face,
More bright through fear's faint shade her wild unconscious grace.

Towards each other their delighted eyes
They smiling turn, and all at once may tell
From their subdued and sinless ecstasies
That these fair children love each other well.
They sport and play in the same native dell ;
There, each lives happy in a shelter'd nest,
And though the children of our vales excel
In touching beauty—far above the rest
Shine forth this starlike pair—the loveliest and the best.

Like a faint shadow falls the pride of youth
O'er faces sparkling yet with childhood's light—
Joy, friendship, fondness, innocence, and truth,
That blushing maiden to her Boy unite
More than a brother dear ! Aye—this glad night
Across their quiet souls will often move,
A spot of vernal-sunshine ever bright !
When through youth's fairy-land no more they rove,
And feel that Grief oft sits beside her sister Love.

But lo ! their graceful salutations lend
A mutual boldness to each beating heart ;
Up strikes the tune—suspense is at an end—
Like fearless forest-fawns away they start !
How wildly nature now combines with art !
The motions of the infant mountaineer
Wont o'er the streams and up the hills to dart,
Subdued by precept and by music here
Enthral the admiring soul at once through eye and
ear !

Like sunbeams glancing o'er a meadow-field,
From side to side the airy spirits swim.
What keen and kindling rapture shines reveal'd
Around their eyes, and moves in every limb !
See ! how they twine their flexile arms so slim,
In graceful arches o'er their hanging hair,
Whose ringlets for a while their eyes bedim.
The music stops—they stand like statues there—
Then parting glide away on noiseless steps of air.

And now a ready hand hath round them thrown
A flowing garland, for their beauteous Queen
Wreath'd by her playmates—rose newly blown
White-clustering 'mid the ivy's vivid green.
Enfolded thus in innocence, they lean

Their silky heads in inclination dear,
Their blent locks fluttering thro' the space between ;
And do they not, advancing thus, appear
Like Angels sent by Spring to usher in the year ?

Their movements every instant lighter grow.
Motion to them more easy seems than rest :
Their cheeks are tinged with a diviner glow—
Their gleaming locks a perfect bliss attest.
Now is the triumph of their art confest
By rising murmurs, and soft-rustling feet
All round th' admiring room—they cease—opprest
With a pride-mingled shame—and to their seat
Fly off, 'mid thundering praise, with bosoms fluttering
sweet.

Around their Queen her loving playmates press,
Proud of her dancing, as it were their own ;
With voices trembling through their tenderness,
Like to the flute's low tones when sweetly blown !
Envy to their pure breasts is yet unknown ;
Too young and happy for a moment's guile !
There Innocence still sacred keeps her throne,
Well-pleas'd, in that calm hold, to see the while
Lingering on human lips an unpolluted smile.

Al! me! that Bards in many a lovely lay,
Forgetting all their own delightful years,
Should sing that life is but one little day,
And this most blessed world the vale of tears!
Even in such songs mysterious truth appears:
We weep—forget—or muse resign'd on death—
But oh! that those inevitable years
The soul should sully with bedimming breath,
And prove how vain a dream is all our childhood's
faith!

Go to thy mother's arms thou blessed thing!
And in her yearning bosom hide thy head:
Behold! how bliss resembleth sorrowing!
When smiles are glistening—why should tears be
shed!

Nor, grey-hair'd man! art thou dishonoured
By those big drops that force at last their way
Down thy grave wrinkled face! When thou art dead,
That child thou knowest will weep upon thy clay—
Thus fathers oft are sad when those they love are gay.

But why should merriment thus feel alloy,
Sanction'd by Nature though such sadness be?
—Look on yon Figure! how he swells with joy!
With head-erecting pride and formal glee!

And may a Poet dare to picture thee,
As stiff thou walk'st thy pupils sly among ;
While roguish elf doth ape thy pedantry ?
Loudly, I trow, would bark the critic throng,
If vulgar name like thine should slip into my song.

And yet thou shalt not go without the meed
Of well-earn'd praise—one tributary line :
And haply as I tune my simple reed,
Such theme the pastoral muse may not decline.
Nor vain nor useless is a task like thine—
That, ere the gleams of life's glad morning fly,
Bids native grace with fresh attractions shine,
Taming the wild—emboldening the shy—
And still its end the same—the bliss of infancy !

Nor think the coldest spirit could withstand
The genial influence breath'd, like balm from heaven,
From rosy childhood, in a vernal band
Dancing before him every happy Even.
When through the gloom their gliding forms are driven,
Like soft stars hurrying through the airy mist,
Unto his heart paternal dreams are given,
And in the bliss of innocent beauty blest
Oft hath that simple man their burnish'd ringlets kist.

No idle, worthless, wandering man is he,
But in this vale of honest parents bred :
Train'd to a life of patient industry,
He with the lark in summer leaves his bed
Through the sweet calm by morning twilight shed,
Walking to labour by that cheerful song ;
And, making now pure pleasure of a trade,
When Winter comes with nights so dark and long
'Tis his to train to grace the smiling infant throng.

And he, I ween, is aye a welcome guest
In every cottage-home on hill and vale ;
And oft by matron grave is warmly prest
To honour with his praise her home-brew'd ale.
Smiles the grown maid her master to regale,
Mindful of all his kindness when a child,
Invited thus, the master may not fail
To laud with fitting phrase the liquor mild,
And prays that heaven may bless the cottage on the
wild.

O fair the mazy dance that breaks my dream !
Heaven dawns upon me as I starting wake !
A flight of fancy this—a frolic whim—
A mirthful tumult in which all partake.

So dance the sunny atoms o'er a lake ;
So small clouds blend together in the sky ;
So when the evening gales the grove forsake,
The radiant lime-leaves twinkle yet on high,
So flutter new-fledg'd birds to their own melody.

Through bright confusion order holds her reign,
And not one infant there but well doth know
By cunning rules her station to regain,
And fearless of mistakes to come and go.
Yet did the master no small pains bestow
On these small Elves so docile, and so true
To tune and figure. Nature will'd it so,
Who fram'd to grace their stature as it grew,
And train'd their fairy feet among the morning dew.

True that, in polish'd life, refinement sheds
A fragile elegance o'er childhood's frame,—
And in a trembling lustre steeps their heads,
A finer charm, a grace without a name.
There, culture kindly breathes on nature's flame ;
And angel beauty owns her genial sway.
But oh ! too oft doth dove-eyed Pity claim
The unconscious victims dancing light and gay,
For sickness lends that bloom, the symbol of decay.

Here Health, descending from her mountain-throne,
Surveys with rapture yon delighted train
Of rosy Sprites, by day and night her own,
Though mortal creatures, strangers yet to pain !
For she hath taught them up the hills to strain,
Following her foot-prints o'er the dewy flowers,
Light as the shadows flitting o'er the plain,
Soon as the earth salutes the dawning hours
With song and fragrance pour'd from all her glitt'ring
 bowers.

Nor deem to gilded roofs alone confin'd
The magic charm of manners mild and free ;
Attendant mostly they on peace of mind,
Best cherish'd by the breath of purity.
Yea ! oft in scenes like this of rustic glee,
Where youth, and joy, and innocence resort,
The *Manners* gladly rule the revelry,
Unseen, they mingle in the quickening sport,
Well pleased 'mid village-hinds to hold their homely
 court.

See ! with what tenderness of mien, voice, eye,
Yon little stripling, scarce twelve summers old,
Detains his favourite partner gliding by,
Becoming, as she smiles, more gaily bold !

'Tis thus the pleasures of our youth unfold
The fairest feelings of the human heart ;
'Nor, o'er our heads when silvering years are roll'd,
Will the fond image from our fancy part,
But clings tenacious there 'mid passion, pride, and art.

Aye ! nights like this are felt o'er many a vale !
Their sweet remembrance mocks the drifted snow
That chokes the cottage up,—it bids the hail
With cheerful pattering 'gainst the panes to blow.
Hence, if the town-bred traveller chance to go
Into the mountain-dwellings of our poor,
The peasants greet with unembarrass'd brow
The splendid stranger honouring thus their door,
And lead his steps with grace along the rushy floor.

But now the lights are waxing dim and pale,
And shed a fitful gleaming o'er the room ;
'Mid the dim hollies one by one they fail,
Another hour, and all is wrapt in gloom.
And lo ! without, the cold bright stars illume
The cloudless air, so beautiful and still,
While proudly placed in her meridian dome
Night's peerless Queen the realms of heaven doth fill
With peace and joy, and smiles on each vast slum-
bering hill.

The dance and music cease their blended glee,
And many a wearied infant hangs her head,
Dropping asleep upon her mother's knee,
Worn out with joy, and longing for her bed.
Yet some lament the bliss too quickly fled,
And fain the dying revels would prolong—
Loth that the parting "Farewell" should be said,
They round the Master in a circle throng—
Unmoved, alas ! he stands their useless prayers among.

And now an old man asks him, ere they go,
If willing he a parting tune to play—
One of those Scottish tunes so sweet and slow !
And proud is he such wishes to obey.
Then "Auld lang syne" the wild and mournful lay
Ne'er breathed through human hearts unmoved by
tears

Wails o'er the strings, and wailing dies away !
While tremblingly his mellow voice he rears,
Ah me ! the aged weep to think of former years !

Now rising to depart, each Parent pays
Some compliment well-suited to his ear—
Couch'd, through their warmth of heart, in florid
phrase,

Yet, by a parent's honest hopes, sincere !
They trust to meet him all another year,
Yr gracious heaven to them preserves the boon
Of life and health—and now with tranquil cheer
Their hearts still touched with that delightful tune,
Homeward they wend along beneath the silent
moon.

O'er Loughrig-cliffs I see one party climb,
Whose empty dwellings through the hush'd mid-
night
Sleep in the shade of Langdale-pikes sublime—
Up Dummail-Raise, unmindful of the height,
His daughter in his arms, with footsteps light
The father walks, afraid lest she should wake !
Through lonely Easdale past yon cots so white
On Helm-crag side, their journey others take ;
And some to those sweet homes that smile by Rydal
Lake.

He too, the Poet of this humble show,
Silent walks homeward through the hour of rest—
While quiet as the depth of spotless snow,
A pensive calm contentment fills his breast !
O wayward man ! were he not truly blest !

That Lake so still below—that Sky above !
Unto his heart a sinless Infant prest,
Whose ringlets like the glittering dew-wire move,
Floating and sinking soft amid the breath of love !

THE END.

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